

PLANNING TO GROW AKRON 2.0

AKRON HOUSING STRATEGY



City of Akron
Daniel Horrigan, Mayor

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2017, the City of Akron released Planning to Grow Akron – The City Housing Strategy. The plan included a review of Akron’s existing housing: supply, programs, demand, conditions and strategies. Recommendations in the plan are intended to reverse the trend of Akron’s declining population and facilitate new investment in the city.

In this new plan, *Planning to Grow Akron 2.0*, summaries of progress on recommended initiatives in the Planning to Grow Akron report are provided and additional recommendations are made.

New recommendations include the following:

- Establish Middle Neighborhood Districts
- Adopt Strategies in Middle Neighborhoods
- Develop City-Owned Vacant Parcels
- Redevelop Summit Lake and Middlebury Neighborhoods
- Revise the Zoning Code to focus on “Missing Middle” Housing
- Create a new “Appraisal Gap” Housing Incentive
- Undertake a City-Wide Comprehensive Plan and City-Wide Assessment of Existing Housing Conditions
- Develop Proactive City-Wide Code Enforcement Recommendations
- Explore participating in the Summit County Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Increase the Supply of Affordable Rental Units
- Create a Tenant / Landlord Commission to Improve Tenant / Landlord Relationships
- Establish Design Guidelines for New Construction
- Promote Adaptive Re-use of Buildings
- Increase Marketing of the Tax Abatement Program and the City as a Place to Live



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“We’ve made a lot of progress but there’s more work to be done to ensure safe, quality housing in every Akron neighborhood.”

— Mayor Dan Horrigan



HISTORY THE ORIGINAL “PLANNING TO GROW AKRON”

When Mayor Horrigan came into office in January 2016, Akron’s housing markets had flatlined. Only 21 permits were pulled for the construction of new housing units in 2015, following the 16 pulled in 2014. Akron built more housing during the Great Depression than had been built in the preceding decade (2006-2016). Hundreds of millions of dollars in hard-earned owner equity had been lost to the foreclosure crisis, when the city was demolishing more than 500 units per year. It was clear drastic measures needed to be taken in order to shock the “patient” back into a normal rhythm.

In February 2017, the City of Akron released Planning to Grow Akron – The City of Akron Housing Strategy. The plan included a review of Akron’s existing housing supply, programs, demand, conditions and strategies. Recommendations in the plan were intended to breathe life back into housing markets, facilitate much-needed new investment, halt further decline and put Akron on a path for population growth.

While the original plan succeeded in stabilizing the city, it did not address the “chronic diseases” that put Akron’s housing market into such a dire situation

in the first place. Community-wide issues such as a lack of traditional lending options, rapidly aging housing stock, record levels of demolition, the legacy of racism and more continue to plague housing in Akron.

This new plan, *Planning to Grow Akron 2.0*, seeks to address some of these systemic issues head on. Summaries of progress on recommended initiatives in the *Planning to Grow Akron* report are provided and additional recommendations are made. Where appropriate, initial recommendations will be expanded upon. In some instances, ideas in the initial plan that are of value and still need to be acted upon will be reiterated.

Where *Planning to Grow Akron* was primarily focused on facilitating new housing construction, *Planning to Grow Akron 2.0* is also addressing neighborhood stabilization by introducing new strategies to strengthen existing neighborhoods. This includes continued updates to the Zoning code to promote equitable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood development and new neighborhood-based initiatives.

List of Accomplishments:

- Adoption of a citywide 15-year residential property tax abatement program in April 2017
- An increase in the number of housing units constructed from less than two-dozen in 2015, to nearly 1,800 now completed or in development (442 complete, 1373 under development)
- An increase in the median sales price of a home in Akron from \$56,000 in 2015 to \$101,000 in 2020
- Akron was ranked as the 12th hottest housing market in the nation, according to the Wall Street Journal, in April 2021
- Akron was ranked as the 3rd most affordable rental housing market in the nation, according to Bloomberg, in May 2021
- Creation of neighborhood plans in Kenmore, Middlebury, and University Park
- Adoption of a form-based zoning overlay and historic district along Kenmore Boulevard



Federal funding for housing has diminished steadily for the past 20 years. As a result, city housing rehabilitation efforts utilizing federal funds have been implemented on a “first come, first served” basis to assist residents who apply for assistance and meet program income requirements. Current federal funding supports lead abatement in homes, emergency roof repairs and emergency repair programs for seniors. Federal funding is also used by the city to support Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO’s) and Community Development Corporations (CDC’s) in their housing rehabilitation and new construction activities. Generally, the CHDO’s and CDC’s work in more targeted areas than the city’s scattered site lead abatement and emergency repair programs.

In order to maximize the impact of limited resources, a new city strategy utilizing targeted areas is recommended for neighborhood stabilization and revitalization. Interventions in tipping point neighborhoods, also referred to as **Middle Neighborhoods**, that are at risk of decline, and those hardest hit by recent economic recessions, should be the city’s priority in the coming decade. Revitalization efforts will be focused in part on specified Middle Neighborhoods throughout the city. The city has also launched a land use planning process for the Summit Lake neighborhood in partnership with existing residents to bring support to one of our most challenged neighborhoods. Additionally, recent progress in the Middlebury neighborhood provides an opportunity to catalyze housing rehabilitation and new construction in a targeted way.

Given the declines in federal support for neighborhood stabilization efforts, coupled with anemic growth in its tax base, it is simply impossible for the city alone to improve housing conditions in every neighborhood. Nor would it make sense. There are Akron neighborhoods where housing markets are healthy and functioning with little need for public intervention. Yet in other neighborhoods conditions present a myriad of

challenges, largely ignored or misunderstood by the private sector, for which solutions have been hard to come by. If the city is to find success improving housing conditions in such neighborhoods, we will need targeted interventions in the short-term that can be scaled up over time.

As stated before, the city by itself does not have the resources to improve housing conditions in every neighborhood. Doing so will take a long-term commitment from partners in the private, non-profit, and philanthropic sectors, as well as from county, state, and federal government. The city intends to solicit support and collaboration from all of the above, advocating for increased investment and cooperation with an eye on racial and geographic equity. By focusing on a few targeted middle and low-income neighborhoods, we can ensure public and private investments actually generate wealth for individuals and families, and accelerate the pace of improvement.

Finally, it is understood that this report comes as Akron faces the full weight of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of which we have only begun to comprehend. Some aspects of the pandemic’s recession, namely a looming eviction crisis, are already clear. While yet more challenges lay in wait, it is safe to say none of them will be helpful to the cause of improving housing for all. The city is committed to minimizing the economic hardships brought on by the virus and put Akron in position to take full advantage of any and all housing stimulus offered by the federal government.



PART ONE:

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS AND ACTIVITIES SINCE THE RELEASE OF THE PLANNING TO GROW AKRON HOUSING STRATEGY IN FEBRUARY, 2017

Housing Sales Data

The city received data from Akron Cleveland Association of Realtors and MLS Now that illustrates an upward trend in sales over the past ten years. The housing crash of 2009 had a dramatic impact on Akron, but by 2016 the City of Akron began seeing significant and continual improvement. The number of sales dropped slightly in 2019 from the three previous years but, in discussions with realtors for this report, they emphasized that in 2020 the market was the hottest it has ever been for homes priced from \$100,000 to \$350,000, where demand far exceeds supply. It appears that the 2021 housing market is off to a similar start. Multiple offers are common and cash offers exceeding the list price are not rare. **The median sales price for a home in Akron has nearly doubled since 2015, increasing from \$56,000 to \$101,000 in 2020.** It is apparent that while Akron may have an oversupply of housing on paper, there is actually an under-supply of marketable housing that people want as evidenced by the appetite for desirable homes when they arrive on the market. This is why prices are rising and days on the market are lessening even in a city that, in theory, has too much housing.

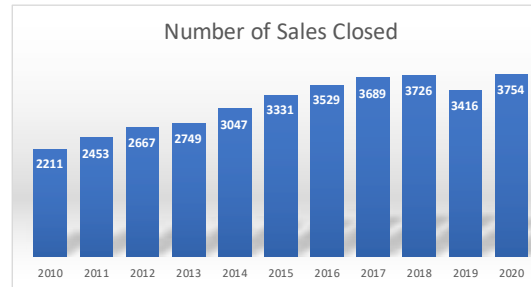


Figure 1. Akron Home Sales (through December 31, 2020)

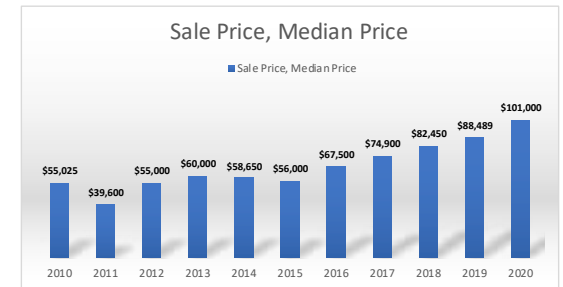


Figure 2. Median Sales Price (through December 31, 2020)

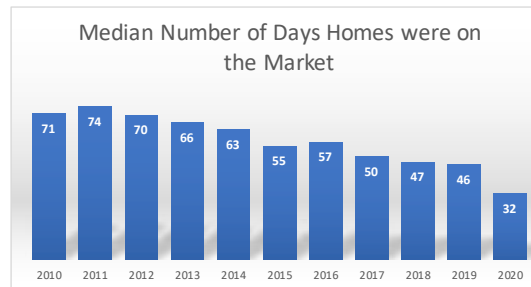


Figure 3. Median Number of Days Homes were on the Market (through December 31, 2020)

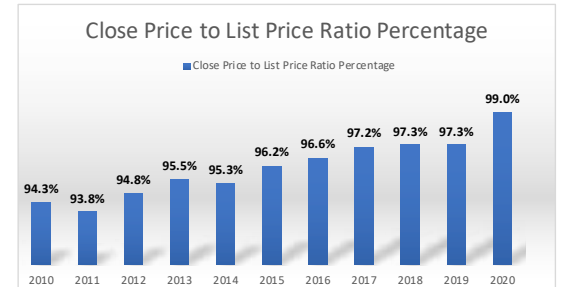


Figure 4. Ratio of Closing Price to List Price (through December 31, 2020)

The best way for the city to continually encourage owner occupancy and minimize investor purchases is by stabilizing home prices.

Tax Abatement — *Designation of the City as a Community Reinvestment Area*

One of the key recommendations of Planning to Grow Akron was to initiate a city-wide residential tax abatement to facilitate investment in housing. This was achieved in April 2017 with the designation of the entire city as a “Community Reinvestment Area” through the Ohio Development Services Agency following adoption by Akron City Council. As of April 2017, any new residential construction or residential rehabilitation project is able to be exempted from paying the tax on the improvement for a period of 15 years after the improvement.

Since the inception of the program through the end of 2020, 206 applications have been received for residential tax abatement projects with a total investment of approximately \$51.0 million in new construction (131 applications) and \$94.5 million in renovation projects (75 applications). New construction projects, rehabilitation projects, projects located downtown and projects utilizing historic tax credits will be discussed separately in more detail in following sections of this report. There is some inherent overlap between some of these categories, but it is important to have a clear understanding of where development is occurring, what type of development is involved and the number of units being either newly constructed or being renovated.



“Planning to Grow Akron 2.0 seeks to address some of Akron’s systemic issues head on.”

— James Hardy Deputy Mayor for Integrated Development

So far, most of the applications for tax abatement have been for individual, single-unit projects – i.e. single-family homes - built or renovated on individual, scattered site parcels across the city. While the city is encouraged by these scattered-site projects, the city is even more encouraged by multi-unit developments that are either underway or in the planning process. Combined, between multi-unit construction projects and multi-unit renovation projects, a total of 1,373 more housing units are in

the pipeline. Of these, 237 units are underway and / or nearing completion and 1,136 units are still in the pre-development stage (**see Table 1, below**). Unlike many of the individual projects which are predominantly located in stronger neighborhoods (as initially anticipated), the multi-unit developments represent a diverse array of housing types, locations and price ranges. Most of these multi-unit projects were dependent on the tax abatement being in place in order to move forward.

Active Housing Developments – Table 1

Type		Neighborhood		Number of units	Project Name	Start date	Status
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Downtown	112	The Law Building	2019	Under Construction
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner Occupied	West Akron	51	Crossings at Auld Farm	2021	Under Construction
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner Occupied	Kenmore	156	The Greens at Lake Nesmith	2021	TBD
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner Occupied	West Akron	82	Residences at Good Park	2021	TBD
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner Occupied	Citywide	8	Habitat for Humanity	2021	Under Construction
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Downtown	150	Ascend	TBD	TBD
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Downtown	95	Citi Center	2021	TBD
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner Occupied	North Hill	12	Harris School	TBD	TBD
New Construction	Multi-Family	Rental	West Hill	40	I Promise	2021	TBD
New Construction	Single-Family	Rental	Citywide	45	New Frontier	2021	TBD
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Middlebury	66	East End II	2021	Under Construction
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Downtown	239	Canal Place	2021	TBD
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner Occupied	Merriman Valley	197	Riverwoods	2021	TBD
New Construction	Single-Family	Rental	West Akron	120	Wintergreen Ledges	2021	TBD

Total 1373

Bold = Low income Tax Credits

List updated Mar 2021

Conversations with the Homebuilders Association and developers have strongly reinforced the importance of the 15-year abatement to City officials, especially with the overall affordability of vacant land in Akron. The over-riding message has been to keep the abatement in place.

The impacted school districts also recognize that in 15 years the direct benefits will begin to accrue for them as well. Indirect benefits resulting from overall increases in property tax values are already being realized by these school districts now.

Completed Housing Projects – Table 2

	Type		Neighborhood	Developer	Number of units	Project Name	Completion Date
New Construction	Multi-Family	Rental	Kenmore	Tober Construction	68	Commons at Stoney Pointe	2018
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Middlebury	Pamboukis	64	797 E. Market	2019
New Construction	Multi-Family	Rental	Middlebury	EANDC	40	Middlebury Commons	2019
New Construction	Multi-Family	Rental	Kenmore	Habitat For Humanity	9	TBD	2018
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Downtown	DeHoff / Welty	92	The Bowery	2020
New Construction	Multi-Family	Rental	Kenmore	Tober Construction	45	Commons at Stoney Pointe II	2019
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner-Occupied	Cascade Valley	Ryan Homes	54	Hickory Street	2020
New Construction	Multi-Family	Rental	North Hill	Testa	40	International House at San Tomasso	2020
Rehab	Multi-Family	Rental	Downtown	Troppe	20	Everett	2020
New Construction	Single-Family	Owner-Occupied	Elizabeth Park	Testa	10	Northside Townhomes	2020

Bold = Low income Tax Credits

Total

442

List updated January 2021

Tax Abatement — New Construction

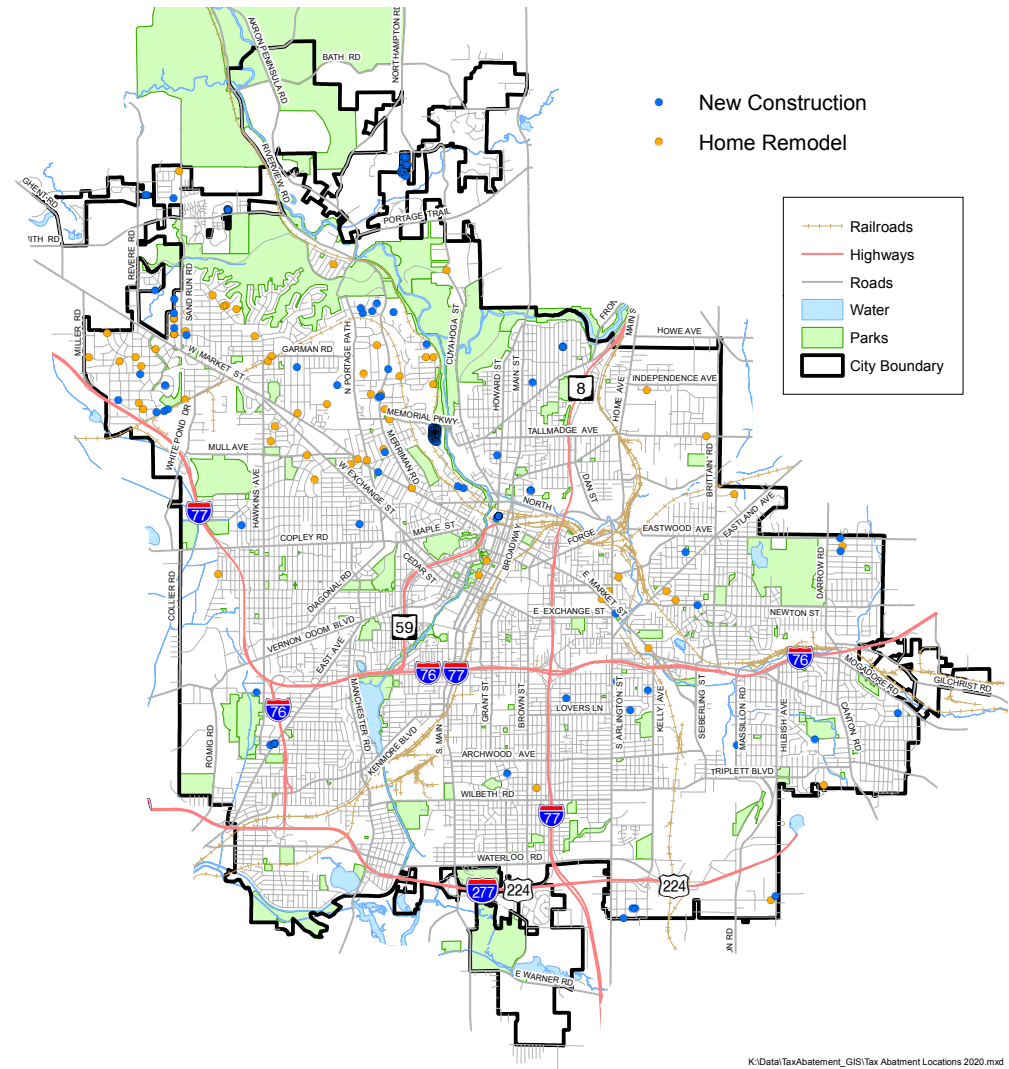
Through the end of 2020, 131 applications have been received for tax abatement for qualified new residential construction. 126 of these are for new single-family homes. Five applications were received for multi-unit apartments (one 2-unit, one 5-unit one 7-unit, one 10-unit and one 40-unit). The chart below shows applications received by year:

APPLICATION BY YEAR

Year	Applications	Units	Investment
2017	7	7 units	\$1,800,000
2018	21	21 units	\$5,600,000
2019	27	38 units	\$11,000,000
2020	76	124 units	\$32,600,000
Total	131	190 units	\$51,000,000

The location of newly constructed units is shown on **Map 1, on the right**. It was accurately anticipated that vacant parcels in the portions of the city with higher property values would be in high demand. On each application submitted to the city for an abatement, the applicant estimates the value of the new construction - the range received has been from \$90,000 on the low end for low income housing tax credit units to \$1.2 million for a single-family home. The average estimated value of new construction for each home is approximately \$300,000.

Map 1 — Residential Tax Abatements, 2017-2020 City of Akron, Ohio



K:\Data\TaxAbatement_GIS\Tax Abatement Locations 2020.mxd
5/26/2020

The construction of new multi-unit developments has accelerated with the abatement playing a significant role in the marketing of lots. Multi-unit, market rate developments include the second phase of the Heron Crest development (24 single-family homes) off of Hardy Road near the northern city limits and the Ryan Homes development (54 units of single-family homes and townhomes) on Hickory Street near downtown. The Ryan Homes development is sold out. Recently completed low-income housing tax credit projects include the Commons at Stoney Pointe I and II (113 apartments), Middlebury Commons (40 apartments) and the International House at San Tomasso (40 apartments).

In discussions with Rochelle Sibbio, the President & CEO of

, she stressed that the abatement is a major factor for their prospective buyers in choosing to have a home built in Akron as opposed to a neighboring municipality. As of March, 2021, Habitat for Humanity will have completed 15 new construction home builds for low to moderate income families in the city utilizing the tax abatement. The tax abatement is directly benefiting low to moderate income homebuyers by lowering a Habitat family's escrow each month an average of \$150, equating to an additional \$1,800 in savings a year and around \$27,000 over the life of the abatement. These new homes also make it more feasible for market rate homes to be built in these neighborhoods.

Numerous other multi-unit, market rate developments are in the planning stages, many of which are located within older Akron neighborhoods. To have new market rate housing constructed in city neighborhoods rather than out on the fringe borders of the city on a new allotment is a very positive sign.

New home construction – Ryan Homes on Hickory



Tax Abatement — Rehabilitation

For rehabilitation projects, property owners continue to be taxed on the pre-improvement value of the property for the 15 years after the improvement took place. However, they do not pay tax on the value of the improvements for 15 years. Seventy-five residential rehabilitation projects have taken advantage of the tax abatement since the inception of the program in April 2017 through the end of 2020.

Significant rehabilitation is presently occurring in multi-unit structures. Many of these projects are utilizing historic tax credits and the tax abatement. The East End project at the former Goodyear Headquarters is beginning a second phase of development that will include the development of 66 luxury apartments. A significant number of projects are located downtown, with many of which are still in the process and have not yet applied for the tax abatement (see pages 13-15 under both Downtown Housing and Historic Preservation and Table 1 on page 8).

East End Development



Seventy-one of the 75 applications received for residential rehabilitation projects were for improvements to single-family homes with a total investment in improvements of approximately \$10,100,000.

The other four applications were for improvements to multi-unit apartments including:

- **A 20-unit apartment on E. Tallmadge Avenue,**
- **The East End (former Goodyear headquarters - 66 units),**
- **The historic Mayflower Manor downtown (233 units) and**
- **The historic Law Building downtown (112 units).**

The investment in these four projects is approximately \$84,000,000.



Downtown Housing

Downtown's future is as a mixed-use residential center, rather than as an office center. This trend is already happening in many cities. Cleveland is seeing this trend on a significant scale, as more and more office space is vacated and retrofitted as residential space. In Akron, the city has intentionally supported this evolution, and this trend is likely to only accelerate as downtown emerges from the pandemic. A Housing Market Analysis and Strategy was prepared for downtown as part of the Downtown Akron Vision and Redevelopment Plan prepared in August 2017 by Development Strategies. That report estimated Akron could absorb 1,500 new units downtown over the next decade. Completed and current projects include:



112
APARTMENTS

The Law Building - Located at 159 S. Main Street, the 12-story Law Building is being converted from 11 stories of office space with ground floor retail to 112 apartments on floors 5 through 12 with office space on floors 2 through 4 and ground floor retail. The investment is \$30 million.



20
APARTMENTS

The Everett Building – Located at the intersection of Main and Market Streets, a total of 20 apartments are proposed for the upper four floors of the building at an investment of approximately \$4.7 million.



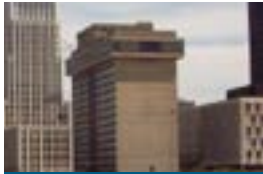
92
APARTMENTS

The Bowery Project - This \$42 million project includes the renovation of six previously vacant storefronts on S. Main Street from Bowery Street south to the Akron Civic Theater. This includes the 11-story Landmark Building located on the corner of S. Main Street and Bowery Street that is being converted into 92 apartments with ground floor retail space.



233
APARTMENTS

Mayflower Manor - The 16-story, 233-unit Mayflower Manor, located at the intersection of S. Main Street and State Street, is being renovated into subsidized apartments for seniors at an investment of approximately \$34 million.



150
APARTMENTS

Ascend (the former City Center Hotel) – Proposed renovation of the 19-story, former City Center Hotel located at Cascade Plaza into 150 luxury apartments with ground floor retail.



239
APARTMENTS

Canal Place – 239 apartment units are proposed in the existing Canal Place buildings located at the south end of downtown.



95
APARTMENTS

Citi Center – Proposed renovation of this 9-story city-owned building located along S. High Street (the former YWCA) from office to approximately 95 apartments and retail / office space.

The City has completed the first phase of the ambitious construction project to remake the Main Street streetscape between Cedar Street and Perkins Street through the heart of downtown. Phase II between Mill Street and Perkins Street began in October, 2020. Both phases of the Main Street improvement were funded through federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grants (TIGER grants). The first phase received \$5 million in TIGER funding in 2016 with construction completed in 2020. The second phase received \$8 million in TIGER funding in early 2019 and is to be completed in 2021. Upon completion, 1.4 miles of Main Street will be transformed into a “Green and Complete Street” corridor with reduced streetwidths, wider sidewalks, improved on-street parking, bike lanes, more greenspace and improved lighting. A roundabout with a sculpture honoring the city’s rubber workers has replaced the traffic signals at the Mill Street intersection. These improvements complements the downtown’s transition to a 24/7 residential environment.

Historic Preservation

Historic landmark designations are extremely important in terms of economic development. For years, private developers have been utilizing historic tax credits in the City of Akron to undertake highly visible renovations of income-producing historic properties that have had a significant impact on the quality of life in Akron for all our residents. In order to utilize these tax credits, buildings must be listed on either the National Register of Historic Places (individually or as part of an historic district) or must have received Local Landmark Status as designated by the city of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and passed by City Council. These historic tax credits are only available for income producing properties such as apartments, restaurants, downtown office buildings, etc. – they cannot be used on non-revenue producing properties such as single-family homes.

Downtown residential projects utilizing historic tax credits include the Everett Building, the Law Building and the Bowery project. Significant progress has also been made in the City in establishing historic districts in neighborhoods. In 2019, the Kenmore Boulevard National Historic District was established by the U.S. Department of the Interior, listing the historic retail district along Kenmore Boulevard on the National Register of Historic Places. Also in 2019, the Aster Avenue Historic District (consisting of the Aster Avenue business district) was established in Firestone Park, with Aster Avenue receiving a local landmark designation through the City of Akron.

The city is considering re-establishing the Heritage Home Program. Prior to the foreclosure crisis in 2008, the City of Akron was working with the Cleveland Restoration Society to support their Heritage Home Program to assist in the renovation of residential properties in Akron's historic neighborhoods.



The Heritage Home Program assists the owners of older homes in maintaining and improving their properties through a combination of technical assistance and low-interest loans with participating area lenders. The Cleveland Restoration Society has been instrumental in revitalizing Cleveland neighborhoods including Ohio City, Tremont, the downtown area, University Circle, Little Italy, and others. Over thirty cities in Cuyahoga County participate in their program. The city will explore re-establishing this program for the benefit of Akron residents and our historic neighborhoods.

The City of Akron has many historic neighborhoods that would qualify for the program including West Hill, Highland Square, Fairlawn Heights, Firestone Park and Goodyear Heights. Creating a program offering low interest loans and technical assistance to rehabilitate qualified homes in a historically appropriate manner would be a first step in creating momentum to revitalize these neighborhoods. In order to implement the Heritage Home Program a funding source to buy down the loans needs to be identified. This could be the city or the county or another entity.

The residents of Goodyear Heights have taken a giant step forward in recognizing their neighborhood as one of the most significant neighborhoods in the United States in terms of its history by working to have the neighborhood listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In the early 1900's, Frank Seiberling, the founder of Goodyear, bought several hundreds of acres of land to build the original Goodyear Heights allotment for his workers. As noted on the Historic Goodyear Heights website, the neighborhood was built in two phases beginning in 1912 in a layout designed by landscape architect Warren Manning, who also worked on the grounds of Stan Hywet. Upon designation, this will be the largest historic district in Akron.

Goodyear Heights



Tax Increment Financing

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) was developed as an alternative to tax abatement. A TIF basically captures a percentage of the real property taxes paid by the property owner and reallocates it to a specific public improvement project necessitated by the property's development. The property owner continues to pay their real estate taxes. But those taxes are used to pay for the public improvement. TIF is especially important in mixed-use projects where the residential portion of the project can apply for tax abatement and the commercial portion receives TIF.

The City of Akron has found TIF to be a valuable tool in funding numerous projects. In order to be able to utilize TIF as a tool, a Redevelopment Plan or Urban Renewal Plan must first be established that encompasses the property in question within the project area boundary. The city will continue to seek ways to utilize tax increment financing to facilitate development.

Firestone Park Great Street – Aster Avenue



Targeted Development Zones / Great Streets Akron Program

One of the recommendations in “Planning to Grow Akron” was for the establishment of targeted development zones. These zones would be identified in areas that are more highly visible and where more mixed use buildings, condominiums, row houses, etc. are appropriate. The East End (Goodyear) and Northside locations are existing examples of this, but the city contains other prime locations where land is vastly under-utilized and would be appropriate for redevelopment.

In 2018, the city initiated its “Great Streets Akron” program in ten neighborhood business districts throughout the city. The program aims to bring renewed energy and investment to Akron’s neighborhood business districts through neighborhood engagement, streetscape enhancements and matching grants for exterior improvements to businesses. The initial districts selected included Copley Road East, Ellet, Firestone Park, Goodyear Heights, Kenmore, Maple Valley, Middlebury, North Hill, Wallhaven and West Hill. Merriman Valley was added in 2019, Vernon Odom Boulevard was added in 2020.



As of the end of 2020, three rounds of matching grant funding have been made available to business owners within the Great Streets districts. The funds can be used for improvements to the exterior of the structure or any other exterior improvements on the property (parking lots, lighting, signage, etc.).

The city works with the applicant throughout the process.

25 businesses have taken advantage of the program to complete over \$1,165,000 in exterior improvements.

The city contributed \$615,000 with the owner's matching funds totaling \$550,000.

80% of the participating businesses identified as a disadvantaged business. (75% MBE and 60% WBE).

The pandemic has resulted in a great deal of financial stress on many businesses.

The city will continue to work with the businesses to try to assist them in whatever way possible.

The city also initiated the first round of funding through the new "Rubber City Match" program in May, 2020. The program matches new or expanding businesses with available vacant storefront space in Great Streets business areas. Funding is available to assist the new and expanding businesses with technical assistance and to property owners to improve the vacant building space to attract a tenant.



Many of the Great Street Districts and surrounding neighborhoods can also benefit from improvements made to local city parks. The Akron Parks Challenge was initiated in 2018 to give the public an opportunity to apply for funding to see their visions for a city park be turned into reality. Five parks have received \$100,000 improvements.

The city will also be working to facilitate new construction in the Great Streets areas on suitable vacant lots. Where appropriate, new multi-story buildings are envisioned with retail on the first floor and residential above.



2018:
Reservoir Park
Chestnut Ridge Park
Cadillac Park

2019:
Park East
(Ohio & Erie Canal Park)
Elizabeth Park

Land Reutilization

Over time, areas that once were appropriate for residential use are no longer suitable for that purpose. The same holds true for aging commercial structures in some areas that are now vacant or under-utilized. These areas should be identified and the city should guide land use in a more appropriate direction. Informed decisions should be made whether land is better suited for use as open space or pocket parks, retail or commercial purposes or new residential, with an eye on the future impact of those uses.



Before photo Perkins Middle School

Vacated school sites offer opportunities for redevelopment as they are usually located within neighborhoods and offer development potential. The first decision is whether or not the former school structure has potential for adaptive

reuse or it has to be demolished. Kenmore High School will be vacated in 2022 and this site would be a prime location for new residential development upon demolition of the school.



Site layout of The Residences at Good Park

In West Akron, Alpha Phi Alpha Homes is in the process of developing the 17 acre former Perkins School site into The Residences at Good Park.

An 82-unit development is proposed consisting of market rate townhomes and custom homes. In North Akron, the former Harris School site located on Dayton Street north of E. Cuyahoga Falls Avenue is also in the planning stages of being developed with single-family homes. Not all land reutilization involves city-owned property. The site of the former Riverwoods golf course and driving range along Akron Peninsula Road is being developed with 197 units of new housing by a private developer. While developments such as these can create concern, it is possible to balance conservation and new housing.

Developable land of a decent size is rare in Akron so opportunities for reutilization of multiple acres of vacant land must be taken advantage of with good planning, partnerships and creativity resulting in quality developments that maximize a site's potential.

Utilization of the Summit County Land Bank

The Summit County Land Bank serves as an agent of the County for the reclamation, rehabilitation and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed or other real property within Summit County. Since its creation in 2012, the Land Bank has participated in community reinvestment and economic development efforts in Akron and the balance of Summit County with the overall goal of revitalizing neighborhoods, stabilizing property values, reducing blight, returning property to productive use and improving the quality of life in our community.

The City intends to increase efforts to engage the Land Bank as an active partner in assembling vacant parcels and dilapidated structures, redeveloping housing, and developing strategic plans for unused parcels. For the success of many of the strategies and goals set forth in the *Planning to Grow Akron 2.0* plan, the Land Bank must be engaged and open to collaboration with the city. The city and Land Bank should explore the ability to further partnerships with area Community Development Corporations (CDC's) to facilitate the rehabilitation of vacant homes. Additionally, the city, Summit County, the Land Bank and others should collaborate to examine the programs and roles of other Land Banks within the State and region to identify best practices for neighborhood stabilization and revitalization. Lastly, given that the city and Land Bank both acquire and demolish vacant and blighted properties, they should work together to develop a strategic approach to their collective acquisition of buildable parcels and the targeting of properties for demolition.

A software system is now in place that allows people to view and propose purchasing city-owned land and Land Bank-owned properties. This software system is web-based and available to the public. Similar efforts should be developed to leverage what the city hopes to become an increasingly collaborative effort between the two organizations and other partners.

The city intends to increase efforts to engage the Land Bank as an active partner in assembling vacant parcels and dilapidated structures, redeveloping housing, and developing strategic plans for unused parcels.



Development and Support of CDC's and CHDO's

Community Development Corporations (CDC's) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO's) are important entities instrumental in neighborhood revitalization. These organizations generally work within specific neighborhoods. In 2018, the city began funding CDC's with up to \$100,000 in annual support for beneficial projects.

Partnering with Community Development Corporations will be beneficial in meeting the needs of the neighborhoods through facilitating neighborhood planning, housing rehabilitation and new housing construction. In partnership with philanthropy, the City of Akron is undertaking a community development review facilitated by Joel Ratner. This review seeks to build capacity and leverage existing resources.

Expedite Permitting Process

A common complaint heard by city officials from area developers is a lack of timeliness in the permitting process. Although developers have noticed improvement, the process is still burdensome with developers needing to submit separate sets of plans to two entities housed under one roof (the Summit County Building Department and the City of Akron Plans and Permits Division). The city will continue to solicit feedback from contractors, the city and the county to work out a process that is more responsive.



East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation



Establish Middle Neighborhood Districts

The City of Akron Office of Integrated Development is recommending targeted investment to specified neighborhood areas with stable housing markets and home values at or about average for the city. In order to maximize investment, the city will focus on neighborhoods that are in generally good condition but could benefit from improvements to the housing stock, infrastructure, streetscape and landscaping to help maintain the neighborhoods viability and desirability. These neighborhoods, while not blighted, have lost some of their vitality. The neighborhoods are not severely distressed, but contain signs that may make potential homebuyers think twice before investing and are troubling to residents. Within the past ten years a specific name has become associated with these areas in post-industrial, legacy cities – Middle Neighborhoods.

An abundance of literature over the past ten years regarding legacy cities and Middle Neighborhoods has been written by economic and planning experts. The Legacy Cities Initiative defines legacy cities as metropolitan areas that contain central cities with over 50,000 residents that have lost at least 20 percent of their population since 1950. These cities are primarily located in the Great Lakes and northeast regions. Akron meets this definition, as does Cleveland. A 2013 Lincoln Institute Report (Regenerating America's Legacy Cities) identified 18 legacy cities: Akron, Baltimore, Birmingham, Buffalo, Camden, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Detroit, Flint, Milwaukee, Newark, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Syracuse and Youngstown. As these cities lost their population, neighborhoods suffered.

Middle Neighborhoods are those areas of the city that are in generally good condition but could benefit from improvements to the housing stock, infrastructure, streetscape and landscaping to help maintain the neighborhoods viability and desirability.

In November 2018, staff of the City of Akron Office of Integrated Development / Department of Planning attended a two-day working group meeting hosted by the Cleveland Fed titled “Building Advocacy for Middle Neighborhoods”. The meeting brought together practitioners, policy makers and researchers dedicated to stabilizing “on the edge” neighborhoods across the country. Speakers stressed that the stabilization of Middle Neighborhoods reinforces inclusive development and racial equity goals. One key idea that weaved throughout is the important role that Middle Neighborhoods play in stabilizing communities and the urban economy. As neighborhoods slip into disrepair, the economy of the immediate region is negatively impacted, not to mention the impact on the most important resource in any neighborhood - the people that live there. A November 2018 article by Paul Brophy and Frank Woodruff, two of the leading proponents of Middle Neighborhoods, stressed that neighborhoods – even blocks within neighborhoods – are determinants of children’s life opportunities, even when families have similar incomes. In many instances, disparities in health impacting life expectancy are based on neighborhood conditions.

Portions of North Hill, Goodyear Heights, West Akron and Kenmore have been identified as the initial Middle Neighborhood districts in Akron. These are stable, middle-class neighborhoods that are showing indications of decline in maintenance and investment. Preserving and expanding the middle class is vital to economic growth and investment. Each of these areas is located in close proximity to an adjacent designated “Great Streets Akron” business district, and the health of these business districts is dependent on the health of the surrounding neighborhoods.



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As the charts below show, the home values in the designated Middle Neighborhoods districts are slightly less than the city median.

Neighborhood	2010 Population	Housing Units	Median Income	Median Home Value
Goodyear Hts	4,404	2,166	\$49,322	\$74,670
Kenmore	2,658	1,224	\$44,065	\$68,020
North Hill	2,127	946	\$51,462	\$76,508
West Akron	2,182	897	\$53,288	\$83,094
City of Akron	199,228	96,347	\$38,642	\$89,215

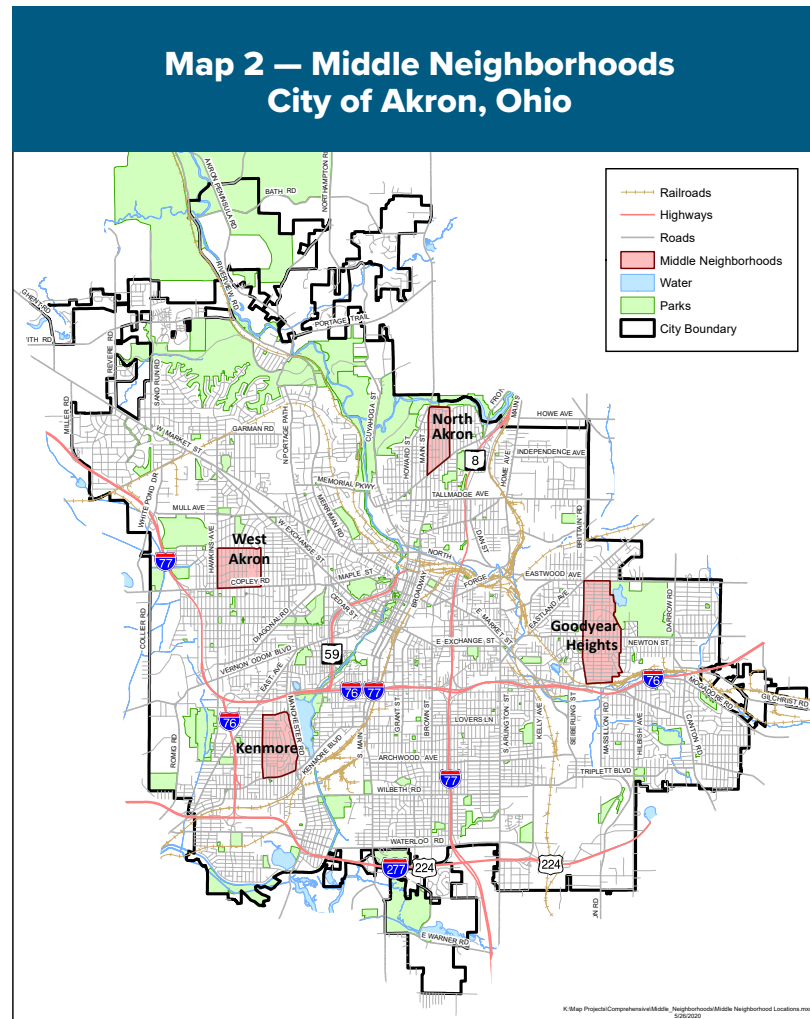
Combined, these areas contain approximately 11,300 residents and 5,200 housing units.

Race	Goodyear Hts		Kenmore		North Hill		West Akron	
White	3,697	83.9%	2123	79.9%	1715	80.6%	329	15.1%
Black	516	11.7%	422	15.9%	311	14.6%	1756	80.4%
Hispanic	61	1.4%	24	.09%	52	2.4%	28	1.3%
American Indian	21	0.5%	4	0.2%	3	0.1%	8	0.4%
Asian	44	1.0%	3	0.1%	32	1.5%	14	0.6%
Pacific Islander	3	0.1%	4	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other	6	0.1%	6	0.2%	8	0.4%	20	0.9%
Two or more	117	2.7%	96	3.6%	58	2.7%	56	2.6%
Total	4404	100.0%	2658	100.0%	2127	100.0%	2183	100.0%

Recommended revitalization strategies in designated Middle Neighborhoods will incorporate the traditional practice of utilizing federal funding to undertake neighborhood improvements with more expansive strategies designed to restore market confidence in neighborhoods. Recognizing that differences from block to block or even from house to house can have a substantial impact on the housing market within individual neighborhoods, plans will be prepared for each block after a careful examination of individual parcels. We will start small - sometimes improved landscaping will have a more substantial impact than improvements to the house.

The following housing goals have been established for Middle Neighborhood Districts:

- **Retain existing owner-occupants and attract new owner-occupants for homes that come on the market (encourage owner-occupancy by keeping home prices stable)**
- **Facilitate new infill housing construction on vacant lots**
- **Attain home values that support quality maintenance**
- **Re-engage residents to provide stewardship over their neighborhood**
- **Provide mixed-income housing choices at a variety of price points**



Long Term Goals and Strategies for Middle Neighborhoods

Grants, low-interest loans, deferred loans and technical assistance to assist with housing rehabilitation

Rehabilitation assistance in the form of grants, loans and deferred loans for housing improvements will be explored to help bring houses in these districts up to code. Federal funding in the form of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and HOME Investment Partnership Program funding necessitate income restrictions on the participants to qualify for assistance. Incoming federal stimulus from the American Rescue Plan can and should be used in support of targeted rehabilitation. Technical assistance is proposed for homeowners wanting to update their homes with more modern amenities and features. Many older homes lack features and upgrades that directly impact resale potential. For instance, some cities are providing programs to assist in the addition of a half-bath for homes with only one bathroom as these homes come up on the market.

Infrastructure Improvements

Curb appeal will be stressed. Streets, curbs, sidewalks, public parks, public facilities and street trees will be evaluated.

Restoring Confidence in Neighborhoods

Restoring consumer confidence and marketing neighborhood assets can be as important as undertaking physical improvements to homes and infrastructure. Many of these recommendations are based on ideas presented by David Boehlke, a leading proponent of healthy neighborhoods. The goal is to make chosen neighborhoods more competitive with other neighborhoods where the housing market is working better. Sales and rental markets, along with the perception of the neighborhood by current residents and businesses, must be understood. Positive attributes of the neighborhood will be identified – unique homes, tree-lined streets, new schools, neighborhood parks, sidewalks, etc.

Strategizing will move from cataloging problems to identifying marketable strengths. Partnerships with local real estate boards are recommended to implement marketing campaigns.

“Great Streets Akron” business areas in proximity to Middle Neighborhood Districts will continue to receive funding to assist business owners to undertake improvements to enhance the vitality of the districts.

Redevelopment of Summit Lake and Middlebury Neighborhoods

In parallel to the Middle Neighborhood strategy, it is vital that the City develop and implement housing interventions within neighborhoods at the lowest end of the market. Through no fault of their own, residents in such neighborhoods have experienced disinvestment and insufficient support for decades. These communities were hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis, and remain extremely vulnerable as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. High concentrations of poverty and vacant or abandoned property tell part of this story, however the other half is filled with hope, opportunity, and determined residents who want revitalization.

In keeping with a more targeted approach, the city will prioritize the Summit Lake and Middlebury neighborhoods as proving grounds for housing interventions in low-income markets.

Summit Lake

The City is currently working with Summit Lake residents to prepare a Land Use Plan for the Summit Lake neighborhood. Unlike Middle Neighborhoods, where housing is relatively stable, historic disinvestment in the Summit Lake neighborhood has resulted in low housing values and an abundance of vacant lots due to demolition of blighted and abandoned homes. Since 2016, the Akron Civic Commons initiative has directed investment along the shoreline of Summit Lake. The City will now be working with neighborhood residents to leverage those investments to spur direct reinvestment throughout the rest of the neighborhood.

The City and the Summit County Land Bank own a significant amount of acreage in the form of vacant lots where a structure once stood. Additional strategic acquisitions may be appropriate if they are aligned with the resident-led land use plan and do not displace a current resident. This bank of available land provides a tremendous opportunity for new infill housing and resident-driven amenities.

The land use plan is scheduled to be completed fall 2021 at which time the City, in partnership with existing residents, will create strategies for implementation which will include housing.

Additionally, the City and Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA) successfully applied for a federal Choice Neighborhoods planning grant from Department of Housing and Urban Development. This work, while primarily focused on improving the public housing along the lake front, will leverage the land use plan and Akron Civic Commons to develop a formal application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for an implementation grant bringing significant funding to the neighborhood.



Middlebury

Completed in 2018, the neighborhood plan for Middlebury envisions a safe, more connected community that celebrates its rich legacy and offers prosperity for all people. Housing plays a central role in realizing this vision for current and future residents. Anchored by Summa Health System and Stark State to the west, and the East End development at the former Goodyear headquarters to the east, Middlebury is poised for a renaissance. Housing rehabilitation and new construction is already underway through the efforts of the East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation and the [Well Community Development Corporation](#).

The city will partner more closely with existing community development partners in the neighborhood to drive additional resources in the areas of housing rehabilitation, new infill construction, and infrastructure improvements.

In order to achieve housing goals in both neighborhoods, an additional long-term strategy is proposed over and above what is contemplated for Middle Neighborhood Districts:



“Appraisal gap” grants, low-interest loans, deferred loans and technical assistance to assist with new infill housing construction.

A major obstacle preventing new infill housing and housing rehabilitation has been the lack of credit for builders and buyers who wish to utilize the tax abatement to construct new market-rate housing or fix up existing housing in core city neighborhoods with low to moderate home prices. Appraisals in these neighborhoods come in less than what it costs to build new or undertake major repairs, leaving a significant financing gap. This “appraisal gap” prevents interested parties from securing the lending necessary to move forward. If we can provide a policy solution to close this gap, thus creating more infill and rehabilitation activity, comps will rise in these neighborhoods stabilizing the market such that the incentive may not be needed in the future. The city will work with banks, developers and the Homebuilders Association to explore this barrier further and launch an intervention to address the “appraisal gap” in the Middle Neighborhood Districts, Summit Lake, and Middlebury.

Revise the Zoning Code to focus on “Missing Middle” Housing

Beyond what has been articulated previously for the Middle Neighborhood Districts, Summit Lake, and Middlebury, housing opportunities in these neighborhoods could also be improved through zoning code reforms. The Zoning Code is a fluid document that is constantly being updated and revised. Following the successful example set by other communities, Akron is adopting more form-based zoning and performance-based zoning that imposes fewer limitations based on densities and land use but are more focused on development standards (location of parking, setback from the right-of-way, etc.). *The City of Akron’s Office of Integrated Development Five Year Strategic Framework for 2019-2024* calls for a comprehensive zoning reform process to begin before 2023. Changes to the Zoning Code have been adopted along Kenmore Boulevard and in a residential portion of West Hill to facilitate practical development. Parking requirements were reduced for downtown and city-wide for apartments. Recent changes have been made for the Firestone Industrial Park and to re-allow retail uses along Romig Road in light of the new Amazon development. Changes are being studied for East Market Street in Middlebury and N. Howard Street in the valley north of downtown.

One specific recommendation is to revise the Zoning Code to focus on “Missing Middle” housing. “Missing Middle” is a term that became popular in the 2010’s to describe house types that were common and popular in pre-1940 neighborhoods but are now often missing due in part to the historic enactment of zoning codes that specified single-family homes.

House types include duplexes, row houses, townhomes, courtyard apartments and mixed-use buildings with a business on the bottom floor and living space on the second-floor. The city will review and identify zoning districts where more flexibility in housing types would be appropriate. Some single-family areas will be rezoned to permit multi-family development. Integrating multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with existing single-family homes will help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living.



Undertake a City-Wide Comprehensive Plan and City-Wide Assessment of Existing Housing Conditions

A city-wide Comprehensive Plan is recommended to study land use throughout the City of Akron. As part of the plan, city staff would undertake a city-wide assessment of existing housing conditions. Every residential structure would be numerically ranked from 1 (sound condition) to 4 (severely deteriorated) and vacant structures will be identified. This data would be color coded and mapped. As part of this study, we will update the Market Value Analysis of the city prepared by the Reinvestment Fund in 2017.

Develop Proactive City-Wide Code Enforcement Recommendations

In an effort to reduce nuisance conditions and property violations in all neighborhoods, city ordinances should be reviewed to ensure that they address code deficiencies and that code standards and requirements are updated and current. Legislation should be put in place to more effectively address out-of-town investors who own blighted properties in the city and continuously violate the city's code enforcement standards.

Ordinances relating to the city's rental registry program must be re-evaluated. Despite the Department of Neighborhood Assistance's best efforts, many of Akron's rental properties still go unregistered. Stiffer penalties for non-compliance may be necessary.



PHOTO BY: H.L. COMERIATO, THE DEVIL STRIP

Explore participating in the Summit County Affordable Housing Trust Fund

With reduced federal funding and limited local funds, the city needs alternative revenue streams to move neighborhoods forward. The city needs to cultivate philanthropy and private investment to address housing – both new housing construction and rehabilitation. This will require working with area foundations and businesses to establish neighborhood endowments.

Summit County has established an affordable Housing Trust Fund working with area foundations, institutions, businesses, benefactors and philanthropists that will be operated by the Western Reserve Community Fund. The need for a Housing Trust Fund was also covered in the original Planning to Grow Akron Report. The Housing Trust Fund could provide gap financing to developers to facilitate new home construction or grants and loans to support housing rehabilitation. It could also be used to facilitate new construction through removal of blight and to develop partnerships with local developers and Community Development Corporations to facilitate the purchase, rehabilitation and resale of blighted properties. The city contribution for the housing trust fund would need to be determined – this could include the City General Fund, CDBG funds, property tax revenues, recording fees, tax increment financing, special assessments from demolition and/or real estate transfer taxes.

For far too long, the City of Akron has been tackling the revitalization of neighborhoods solely with increasingly-scarce federal funds obtained from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. A robust Housing Trust Fund would widen revenue streams for housing revitalization efforts.



Summit County has established an affordable Housing Trust Fund working with area foundations, institutions, businesses, benefactors and philanthropists that will be operated by the Western Reserve Community Fund.



Increase the Supply of Affordable Rental Units

The city has long been supportive of affordable housing units and providing options for our residents to have access to clean, safe, affordable housing. The high number of evictions filed in Akron has been an ongoing concern. Landlords have created unnecessary barriers to affordable housing and continue to hesitate leasing to certain sub-populations. Ongoing dialogue between the City of Akron and the Akron / Summit County Continuum of Care case managers have revealed alarming trends regarding the inability of obtaining housing for clients seeking housing. The city is aware of these concerns and will endeavor to address the problem.

The city will work with non-profit and for-profit developers to increase the supply of affordable private market rental properties to meet the demands of a diverse population and provide greater protection and support to tenants. “Missing Middle” housing types are one way to provide more affordable housing types in the city. For example, an entry level homeowner can build equity in a duplex while having a tenant help make the monthly mortgage payment.

The City of Akron and the Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care (CoC) have recognized that more safe, warm and dry affordable housing is a primary need in Akron. The city and the CoC are working together to develop a homeless strategic plan that will serve as the decision- making framework for the CoC, its partners and its funders going forward.

Create A Homeless Strategic Plan

The proposed strategic plan to be developed will focus on:

- significantly preventing and/or reducing homelessness;
- determining homeless sub-population needs;
- developing and presenting data and information necessary for understanding the scope of homeless populations and opportunities relative to homelessness in Akron and Summit County;
- identifying needs and resources;
- expanding availability of affordable housing within the community; and
- improving access to affordable housing for homeless persons.

This homeless strategic plan is moving forward with an anticipated completion date in 2022.



Create a Tenant / Landlord Commission to Improve Tenant / Landlord Relationships

The City of Akron has the highest eviction rate in the State and 24th highest in the nation – a problem that must be addressed. Proactive steps must be taken to improve landlord / tenant relationships and help educate tenants and landlords about their rights and responsibilities within that legal relationship. Tenants must be offered greater protection and support. Again, the drivers of Akron’s high eviction rate are numerous and complex. Special attention is being given to this issue, but more must be done. Community partners, the Akron Municipal Court and the city must work together to achieve greater equity within tenant/ landlord relationships in Akron.

Promote Adaptive Re-use of Buildings

One definition of the term “adaptive reuse” is the conscious decision to preserve the past while planning for the future. Too often, buildings with adaptive reuse potential are demolished, eliminating both valuable square footage and, in many instances, a slice of our city’s history.

Every effort should be made to reutilize older buildings as an alternative to demolition, especially buildings that are integral to Akron’s history or have square footage that will not be replaced. The city will continue to meet with property owners to promote the benefits of adaptive reuse and alternatives to demolition when situations arise.

Establish Design Guidelines for New Construction

One of the core values of the Office of Integrated Development Strategic Framework released in 2020 is that beauty is a basic right. All who live, work, do business and visit Akron should experience high-quality design in buildings, infrastructure and public spaces. While the city wants to facilitate new housing, quality design of the units is key and design review is necessary, especially concerning development of land controlled by the city.

For example, placement of garages is especially important to ensure that new homes match existing housetypes and create a public realm that is walkable, safe, and equitable for all neighborhood residents.

Improve Marketing of the Tax Abatement Program and the City as a Place to Live

Marketing of the tax abatement, and what the City of Akron has to offer as a whole, is vital. If people don’t know about the residential tax abatement program, they cannot take advantage of it. This includes developers, real estate agents, homebuilders, homebuyers, Akron residents and prospective new residents. The city-wide residential tax abatement should be one of the first things anyone sees when they visit the Akron website. People need to know that Akron is a green city filled with parks. A National Park, hundreds of miles of trails and a Great Lake are on our doorstep. The Towpath Trail runs through the heart of the city.

The city also needs to market the affordability of homes in Akron, especially in areas where development is taking place. While many of the older homes in the city may not be ideal for larger families due to a lack of bathrooms, smaller room layouts, etc. the lack of many of these features reduces the price and makes these homes ideally suited for single individuals and couples with no children. According to 2010 Census data, of the roughly 84,000 households in the City of Akron, over one-third of the households (29,516 – 34.8%) consist of a householder living alone.

Conclusion

Planning to Grow Akron 2.0 seeks to establish initiatives that will make Akron a more equitable, pedestrian-oriented city of beautiful neighborhoods, parks and business areas. Solid housing is the backbone of any neighborhood – creating a sense of community that invites, welcomes, and supports all residents.

Akron finds itself at a tipping point when it comes to housing. The effects of the foreclosure crisis and the Great Recession are now colliding with those of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is urgency to this moment that should not be dismissed. While it's true the task ahead of us is daunting, it is also well within Akron's capacity to make meaningful progress over the next five years. We must be targeted at first — ensuring interventions work before scaling to other neighborhoods. We must be collaborative, recognizing that the city cannot do it alone. With federal stimulus on its way from the American Rescue Plan, the city has an once in a lifetime opportunity to make meaningful investments in housing that can transform the trajectory of priority neighborhoods. Philanthropy and the private sector can and should co-invest in city priorities thus doubling their impact and chances for success. Together with residents we can set Akron's housing on a course to recovery.

Akron finds itself at a tipping point when it comes to housing. The effects of the foreclosure crisis and the Great Recession are now colliding with those of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is urgency to this moment that should not be dismissed.

Our Partners:

Akron Civic Commons	Historic Preservation Commission
Akron Cleveland	Kenmore Neighborhood Alliance
Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority	MLS Now
Akron Parks Collaborative	Mustard Seed Development Center
Association of Realtors	Nazareth Housing Development
Bounce Innovation Hub	North Akron Community Development Corporation
City of Akron Urban Design	Progressive Alliance CDC
Cleveland Restoration Society	Summit County Land Bank
East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation	The Well CDC
Habitat for Humanity of Summit County	Western Reserve Community Fund, Inc.

A special thank you:

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AKRON CITY COUNCIL	
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Donnie Kammer <i>Ward 7, Council Representative</i>	Bob Keith <i>Clerk of Council</i>





City of Akron
Daniel Horrigan, Mayor

