



CENTRAL WARREN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

2015

Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership
Warren, Ohio

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Meeting Hosts

York Ave Church of God
Parkman Road COGIC
Raymond John Wean Foundation
YMCA Warren
YWCA Warren
Dave Natale
Knights of Columbus
Christ Episcopal Church
Deliverance Temple Church
USW Local 1375
King of Kings Church
RBG Eatery
Covenant Presbyterian Church
Friendship Baptist Church

Southwest Neighborhood Association
Community Concerned Citizens II
Southeast Side Community Association
Kenmore Neighborhood Association
Northeast Warren Neighborhood Association
North End Environmental Neighborhood Association
Northwest Neighborhood Association

Special Thanks To Partners

The Raymond John Wean Foundation
Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative
Youngstown State University
John Bralich (YSU)
Alex Bobersky
Kent State University
Parsons the New School
Trumbull County Treasurer's Office
Trumbull County Land Bank

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INTRODUCTION

Community Challenge Grant Program

Overview of Community Challenge Grants Program:

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's \$28 million Community Challenge Planning Grant Program fosters reform and reduces barriers to achieving affordable, economically vital, and sustainable communities. Such efforts may include amending or replacing local master plans, zoning codes, and building codes, either on a jurisdiction-wide basis or in a specific neighborhood, district, corridor, or sector to promote mixed-use development, affordable housing, the reuse of older buildings and structures for new purposes, and similar activities with the goal of promoting sustainability at the local or neighborhood level. This Program also supports the development of affordable housing through the development and adoption of inclusionary zoning ordinances and other activities to support planning implementation.

The Warren Community Challenge Grant:

The City of Warren was awarded \$356,964 for the Warren Community Challenge Program. Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership was subcontracted to complete the work of the grant. The overall goal of the Community Challenge Project is to promote sustainability at the local neighborhood level by addressing the needs for demolition, housing rehabilitation, and vacant land reuse in the efforts to support sustainable, affordable communities. A review of the city's current, historical, and emerging needs led to the development of an action plan that included a citywide parcel inventory divided into five targeted areas to identify vacant housing and vacant land; collaboration with Trumbull County Land Reutilization Corporation (TCLRC) to acquire and transfer ownership of property to owners who have demonstrated an ability to do rehabilitation; reinvigoration of the city's code enforcement system; assessing vacant land for viability for land recycling; and a review of Warren's zoning code to remove regulatory barriers to urban agriculture and greenspace use.

Final Deliverables:

- Comprehensive Parcel Inventory
- Priority Demolition and Rehab Lists
- Neighborhood Plans: Plans will document long-term strategies for handling vacant properties, recommendations for neighborhood projects, and other relevant recommendations for revitalization.

INTRODUCTION

Grant Tasks

Task 1: Parcel Inventory

TNP completed a comprehensive residential parcel inventory that documents the conditions of all residential parcels in the City of Warren.

Task 2: Community Engagement and Participation

TNP has completed 4 rounds of public engagement efforts. Community members from each neighborhood were invited to discuss the conditions of their neighborhoods, see the data that TNP collected, and consider potential land reuse projects throughout their neighborhoods.

Task 3: Vacant Structures and Land Bank Utilization

From the inventory of residential parcels, TNP has created prioritized demolitions lists. These have been modified for each round of funding that has become available throughout the grant period. TNP is in the process of documenting a long-term strategy for vacant properties to be included in complete neighborhood plans for each neighborhood.

Task 4: Vacant Land Reutilization

TNP continues to identify sites for land re-use projects based on available properties, community input, available project “shepherds,” and site viability. The Lots to Love project will be released shortly and TNP will invite project ideas from the community, manage the installation of the project, and provide technical support to community groups who are awarded through the program.

Task 5: Zoning

Originally, the HUD grant called for a comprehensive review of the zoning code for the City of Warren. The original plan was to contract out this piece of the grant proposal. The City determined that this was not a productive use of resources, and TNP converted this portion of the proposal into a supportive zoning staff position that would have broader responsibilities, but would still provide guidance for possible legislative and zoning changes to support urban agriculture.

Task 6: Policy Priorities

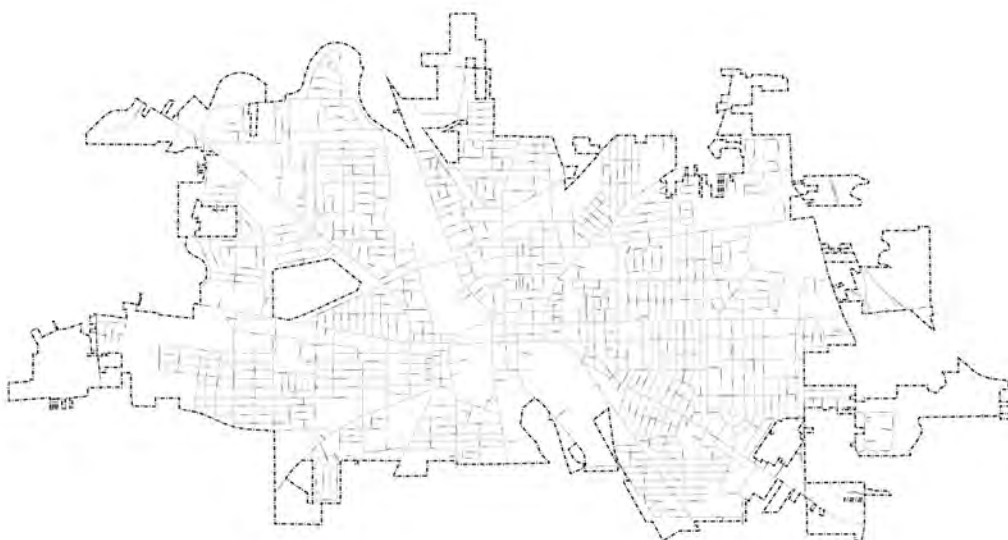
TNP maintains regular dialogue with supporting partners and provides appropriate policy guidance based on the findings of the inventory and the regular input from community members and supporting partners.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Warren's History

In 1798 Ephram Quinby purchased the land that he would name after Moses Warren. This land was part of the Connecticut Western Reserve and Ephram Quinby's new settlement was named the county seat of Trumbull County, which at the time covered all of the Connecticut Western Reserve's 120 miles. For the first 30 years after its settlement, Warren was the fastest growing and most prosperous town in the region. Unfortunately, with the economic advantage of canal shipping and the development of the Erie Canal in 1825, Cleveland and Pittsburgh began to outpace Warren. As a result of the canal and of local politics, Warren did not see much growth during the remainder of the 19th century and industrialization and manufacturing did not arrive in Warren until the 20th century. The majority of Warren remained agricultural.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a Board of Trade was established, the goal of which was to attract industry to the city of Warren. In 1906 the steel manufacturer that would later become Republic Steel arrived in Warren. Additionally, the Board of Trade succeeded in attracting several craft industries. Between 1910 and 1930, Warren was once again a fast growing city. The rapid growth of Warren during times of industrial boom, gives a partial explanation for the lack of named neighborhoods in the city.



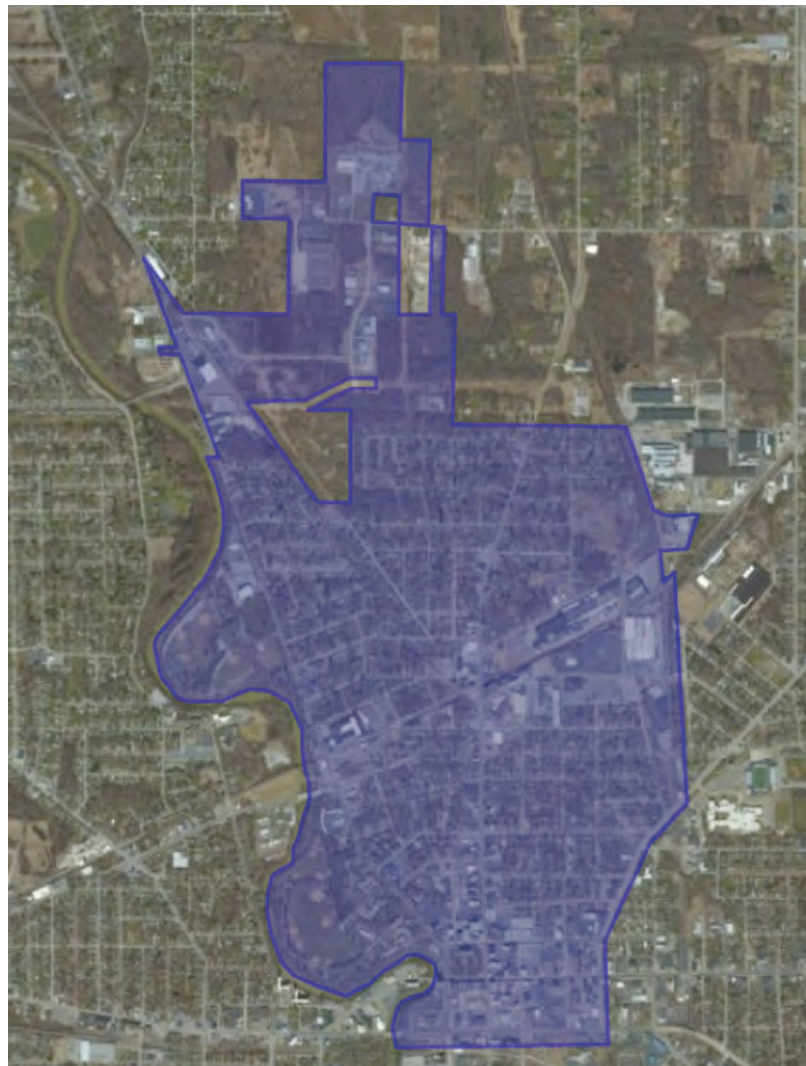
***The City of
Warren***

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Neighborhood Boundaries

The area we have classified as Central Warren is bordered by the Mahoning River to the west, South Street to the south, and Chestnut, Elm, and Paige to the East. On the north, it reaches to the city limits. This area is home to two historically distinct neighborhoods, Historic Perkins Homestead and the North End. The remainder of the central portion of Warren has recently been dubbed the “Garden District” due to an increasing number of wildflower gardens, community gardens, and other green-space projects replacing formerly vacant homes. Historic Perkins and the Garden district hold the majority of our city’s most historic housing. These areas were developed in the 1920s. This is additionally our historic preservation district.

Central Warren Boundary



NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Historical Neighborhood

The Central Warren area is divided into three distinct neighborhoods. This is one of the few areas of Warren that possesses historical neighborhood place names, according to local historian Alex Bobersky. The neighborhoods with names are the Historic Perkins Homestead Neighborhood and the North End neighborhood. The other neighborhood of the central city has recently been dubbed the “Garden District.” The Historic Perkins Homestead Neighborhood is so named for the Family of General Simon Perkins. Perkins settled Warren in 1798 while working for the Erie Land Company, a subsidiary of the Connecticut Land Company. The North End, was also part of the Perkins’ holdings, and was given to Jacob Perkins, son of Simon Perkins, while the Perkins Homestead passed to Henry Bishop Perkins.

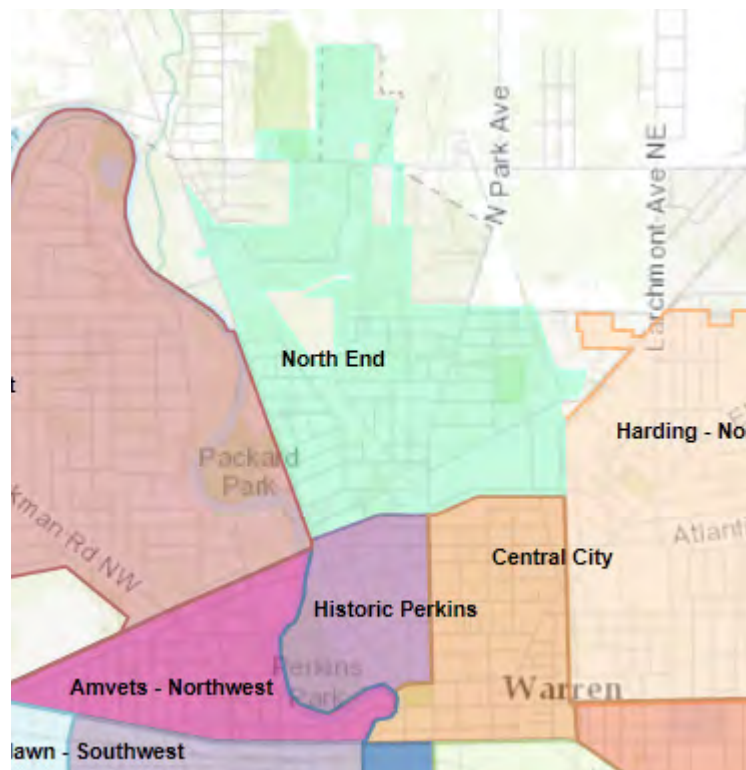
The mean year homes were built in Historic Perkins was 1905; this is the same for the Garden District. These areas were the first housing developed in Warren, with homes built before 1900 and more development at the beginning of the 20th century, following the creation of a Board of Trade that effectively took over economic leadership from Henry Bishop Perkins in 1906. Their efforts attracted several small craft industries, and finally in 1913, the steel company that would later be Republic Steel. As such, these are Warren’s oldest homes; they also fall within the Historic Review District. The homes on Mahoning Ave. were part of Warren’s “Millionaires’ Row” and are some of the largest and most elaborate homes of the city. The mean year built for homes in the “North End” was 1927. These homes are smaller and the neighborhood was an immigrant neighborhood that housed many Italian, Greek, and Lebanese people. This neighborhood housed workers for the industries that grew quickly during the first 30 years of the twentieth century.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Current Neighborhood

In Central Warren, this report divides the Central area into 3 neighborhoods based on the historic boundaries of the Historic Perkins Homestead Neighborhood and the North End Neighborhood, with the remaining neighborhood as the Central City. Within the Central City is also the recently named “Garden District” a longtime area of disinvestment which has seen a recent resurgence around wildflower gardens from the Gregg’s Garden project, and other local community gardens. The Historic Perkins Homestead Neighborhood is the area with the highest home values in Central Warren, due to the historic nature of the properties and the presence of “Millionaire’s Row” in the neighborhood. There are more homeowners in the Historic Perkins Neighborhood than in the Central City neighborhood, resulting in many of the properties being better cared for than similar properties in the Central City neighborhood. Historic Perkins also benefits from the presence of Perkins Park, one of the largest and most active park facilities in Warren. The Central City neighborhood is highly transient. The North End neighborhood has a high proportion of homeowners. The North End neighborhood benefits from housing Packard Park, Packard Museum, and Packard Music Hall.

Central Warren Neighborhood Boundaries



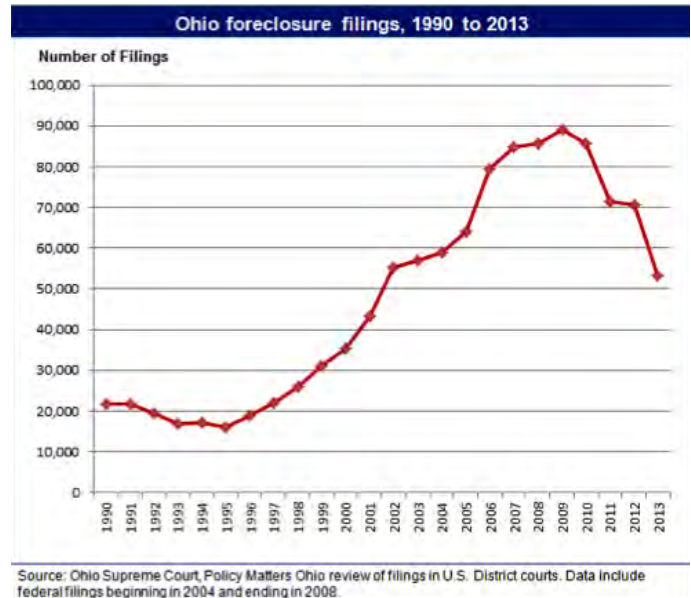
HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

Population Decline and Foreclosures

Warren has a population of approximately 41,000 people. It is the county seat and second largest city within the Youngstown-Warren Metropolitan statistical area. Warren has suffered continued population decline following the loss of many manufacturing jobs and problems created by the foreclosure crisis. Ohio had the highest percentage of homes in foreclosure, at 3.9%, nationwide in 2007 (Mortgage Bankers Association). Mortgage filings have been on the decline since their peak in 2009. In Trumbull County in 2009, there were 1605 new foreclosure filings. In 2013 that number had dropped to 1077. When comparing the number of filings per 1,000 people, Trumbull County ranks 13th out of 88 counties in highest number of foreclosure filings. Cuyahoga and Mahoning counties both currently have a higher foreclosure rate, while Summit County's is identical to Trumbull, and Ashtabula, Columbiana, Stark, and Portage all have lower rates. Though the foreclosure rate is falling, and has declined significantly since 2009, it is still significantly higher than at any time during the 1990s.

In addition to foreclosure increases, other shifts have also influenced the housing market within the City of Warren. The 2009 Revitalization strategy discussed the issue of "white flight," citing negative perceptions of public schools amongst the reasons for the trend. Between 1990 and 2010, the white population fell by 30% and the non-white population grew by 26%. Statewide, numbers of whites and non-whites have both increased over the same time period, supporting the concept that white residents are leaving cities, including Warren, but not decreasing overall.

Ohio Foreclosure Filings - Total



Ohio Foreclosure Filings - By County

County	Population	Filings	Filings per 1,000 ppl
Cuyahoga	1,263,154	8,829	6.99
Mahoning	233,869	1,306	5.58
Summit	541,824	2,829	5.22
Trumbull	206,442	1,077	5.22
Ashtabula	99,811	505	5.06
Columbiana	105,893	420	3.97
Stark	375,432	1,466	3.90
Portage	163,862	552	3.37
Geauga	93,972	303	3.22
State of Ohio	11,570,808	53,163	4.59

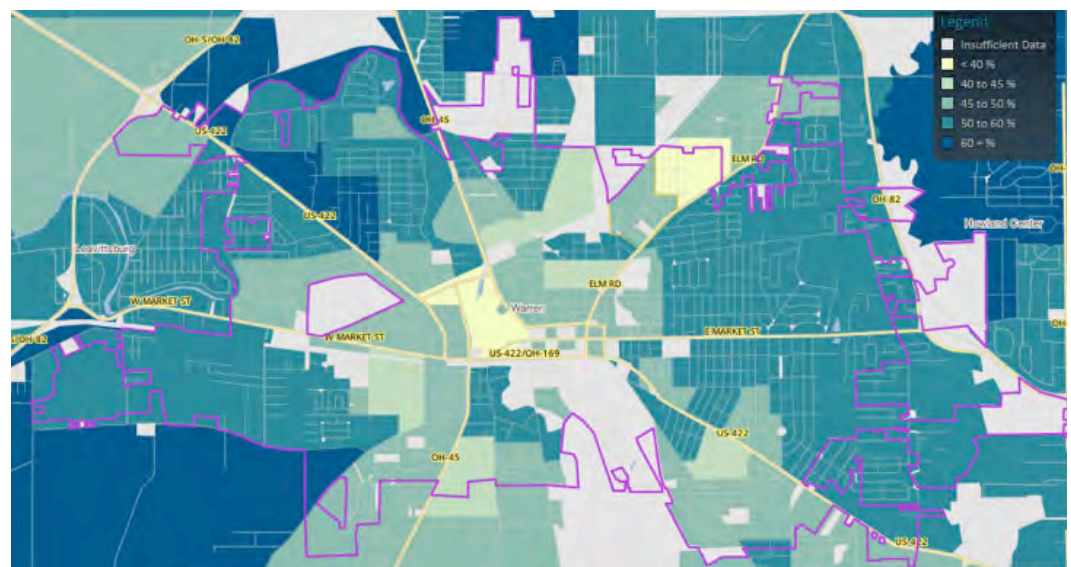
HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

Housing Affordability

Traditionally, housing affordability has been investigated by looking at the percentage of income spent on housing. The measure of affordability has been that no more than 30% of household income should be spent on housing. This measure did not take into account additional costs incurred by people who are able to find affordable housing, but not close to other opportunities for education and work. The H&T affordability index includes transportation in the assessment of housing affordability and stipulates that, in order to be considered affordable, a household should spend no more than 45% of its income on housing and transportation combined. In the City of Warren, the H&T affordability calculator shows that although Warren residents have affordable housing, when transportation costs are included 86.7% of Warren residents are paying greater than the 45% of income standard of affordability. According to the H&T Affordability index, Warren households on average spend 50.14% of their income on transportation and housing. The below map illustrates the Housing and Transportation cost affordability throughout the city. In Historic Perkins, residents are spending 45-50% of their income on Housing and Transportation. In parts of the central city, this goes as high as 50-60% of residents' income. The North End shows the same trend, some places only 45-50%, but others are at 50-60%. None of the neighborhoods fall below the recommended 45% threshold for affordability.

"H+T has been developed as a more complete measure of affordability beyond the standard method of assessing only Housing Costs. By taking into account both the cost of housing as well as the cost of transportation associated with the location of the home, H+T provides the true cost of housing decisions. Dividing these costs by the representative income illustrates the Cost Burden placed on a Typical Household by combined H+T expenses." - htaindex.cnt.org, Center for Neighborhood Technology

Housing + Transportation Cost as a Percentage of Income



HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

Housing Size and Type

As shown in the table, Warren had a higher percentage of single-person households (35.6%) than the statewide average (28.9%) in 2010. Estimates for 2013 show that number is continuing to grow. The average household size is slightly lower than the average household size statewide. These facts suggest that Warren needs to pursue housing more conducive to singles and small families. In addition, Warren is seeing higher senior citizen population than the statewide average. More Warren households have at least one person 65 years old or older (28.9%) than statewide (25.3%). Housing will need to meet the needs of this aging population as well.

In Warren 29.8% of households have a child less than 18 years of age, which is extremely close to the statewide percentage of 31.3. This is slightly less than at the 2000 Census, which was 32.7%. At that time the statewide percentage of households with children was 34%. Although Warren has fewer households with children, that number is falling more slowly than the statewide number.

In the midst of growing single householders and aging household members, Warren should not forget to meet the needs of families, which continue to be a significant portion of households.

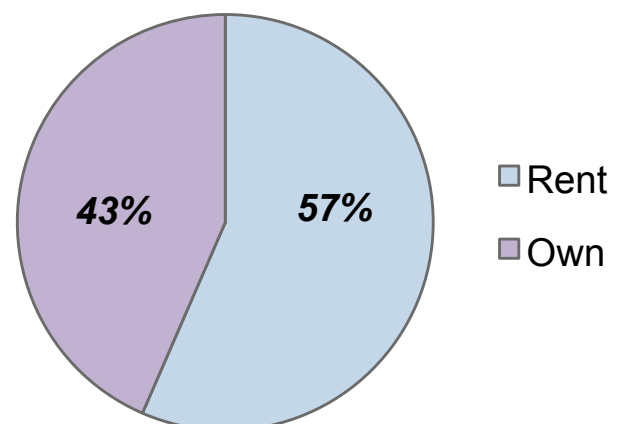
Compared to the state overall, Warren has a high percentage of renters. Specifically, Warren has an extremely high rate of renters in the 25-44 age cohort, where 58.4% of householders in the cohort are renters. Statewide, only

Figure 4 - Warren Household Data

2010 Census Data		
	City of Warren	State of Ohio
Households	17,003	4,603,435.00
Household Size by Percentage		
1 Person	35.60%	28.90%
2 Persons	31.20%	34.10%
3 Persons	15.10%	15.60%
4+ Persons	18.10%	21.40%
Average Household Size	2.30	2.44
% of Family Households	58.90%	65.00%
% of Households with children	29.80%	31.30%

2013 ACS 3 Year Estimates		
	City of Warren	State of Ohio
Households	17618	4551497
Household Size by Percentage		
1 Person	42.40%	30.00%
2 Persons	28.50%	34.60%
3 Persons	14.00%	15.20%
4+ Persons	15.10%	20.30%

Warren Householders



HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

Housing Size and Type

Warren Household Structure

	City of Warren	State of Ohio
FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS		
A. Married Couple with Child(ren)		
2000 Census	3073	1043264
2010 Census	1896	893911
2013 Estimates	1742	848376
CAGR, 2000-2013	-0.04	-0.02
Avg. Annual Gain (loss)	-102.38	-14991.38
% to total	9.89%	18.64%
B. Married Couple, No Child(ren)		
2000 Census	4338	1242534
2010 Census	3516	1279566
2013 Estimates	3311	1284165
CAGR, 2000-2013	-0.02	0
Avg. Annual Gain (loss)	-79	3203.38
% to total	18.79%	28.21%
C. Single Parent Family		
2000 Census	3228	468402
2010 Census	3516	523349
2013 Estimates	4220	511097
CAGR, 2000-2013	0.02	0.01
Avg. Annual Gain (loss)	76.31	3284.23
% to total	23.95%	11.23%
NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS		
A. Single Person Households		
2000 Census	6344	1215614
2010 Census	6050	1328550
2013 Estimates	7467	1366342
CAGR, 2000-2013	0.01	0.01
Avg. Annual Gain (loss)	86.38	11594.46
% to total	42.38%	11.23%
B. All Non-Family Households		
2000 Census	7253	1452750
2010 Census	6990	1611806
2013 Estimates	8345	1631308
CAGR, 2000-2013	0.01	0.01
Avg. Annual Gain (loss)	84.00	13735.23
% to total	47.37%	35.84%

43% of residents in this cohort are renters.

This high percentage of renters illustrates an additional challenge for the Warren housing market. Not only are there fewer people in the City, a smaller percentage of those people are choosing homeownership. During the public outreach process, concerns about renters in neighborhoods were common. Many homeowners share the feeling that renters are not as invested in the neighborhood and do not care about the maintenance of the property in which they live in or in the care of neighborhood assets.

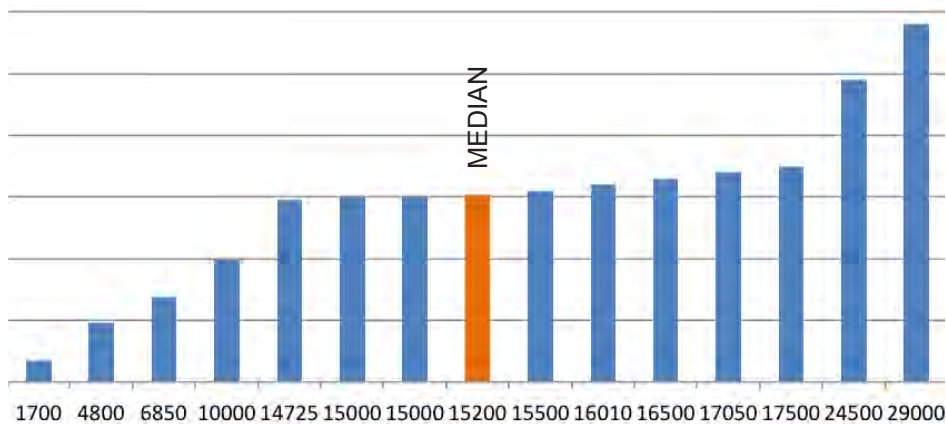
One of the likely reasons that these issues were prevalent during public outreach is that, although Warren has a high percentage of renters, there is also a high percentage of residents who have lived in their home for more than 20 years. According to the 2013 ACS estimates, over 25% of Warren residents moved into their current residence prior to 1989, compared with 23% of Ohioans overall.

Warren is also losing married couple households. The 2009 Revitalization strategy showed that Warren was losing married couple households at a rate of 3.9% per year between 1990 and 2008. That rate between 2000 and 2013 shows that Warren is now losing married couple households at a compound rate of 4% per year, with an average yearly loss of 102 such households. This includes both married couples with and without children. Single Parent families have grown over this same time period at a compound annual growth rate of 2% per year since 2000.

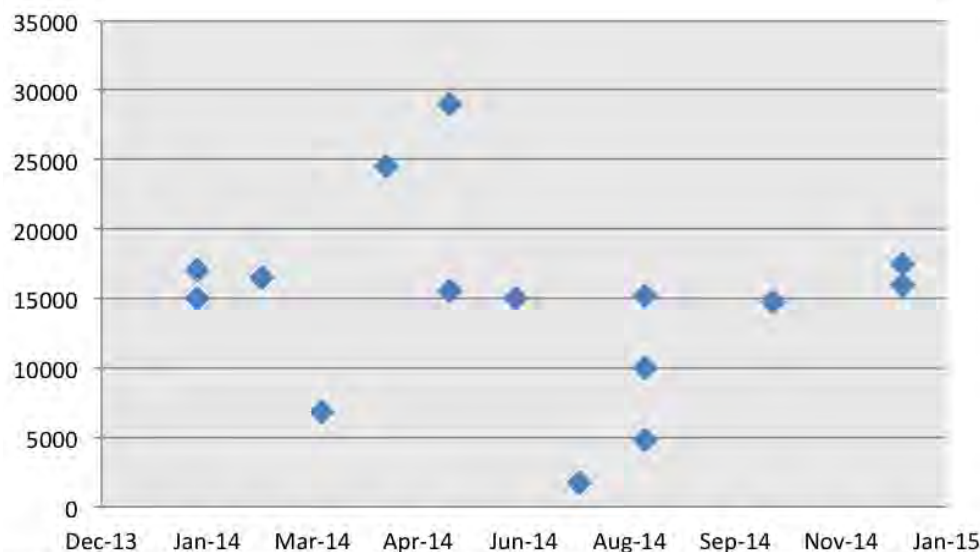
HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

Central Warren Area Specifics

The Central Warren housing market is extremely weak. In 2014, only 15 residential homes were sold in Central Warren. The highest sale price in Central Warren in 2014 was \$29,000, the lowest was \$1,700. The peak price was for a property within the Historic Perkins district, which was originally listed at \$47,500, selling for just over 60% of the asking price. The average sale price was \$14,622 and the median price was \$15,200. Though this certainly means that housing is affordable in this neighborhood, where houses sell for significantly less than the cost of building a new house, there is no incentive for developers to build anything other than subsidized housing in the neighborhood. Additionally, homeowners are less likely to invest money into maintaining or rehabilitating properties, given that they would not be able to recoup that investment in a sale.



Prices of Central Warren Homes Sold in 2014



Central Warren Homes Sold in 2014

PUBLIC INPUT

The Engagement Process



A major goal of the Warren Community Challenge Program was to ensure that residents of each neighborhood are aware of the housing situation in their neighborhood and have an opportunity to provide input into what type of solutions they would like to see implemented in their neighborhoods. In order to accomplish this, we underwent a lengthy public engagement process, in several rounds. Meetings were open to the public, and divided by neighborhood. Our outreach process included four rounds of Public Outreach in each of the 5 areas of Warren.



PUBLIC INPUT

Round 1 - Identify Opportunities

The first round of engagement was an introduction to the Community Challenge Process and an opportunity for us to hear from residents about what they think about their own communities. During each meeting, residents went through a variation on a SWOT exercise, in which they talked about Strengths, Challenges (Weaknesses), the specific threat of vacant housing, and the opportunities and goals for the neighborhood.

In that first meeting, discussion groups were divided between residents who lived north of the railroad tracks and south. This paired Historic Perkins together with Central City, and the second group was North End.

In Historic Perkins/Central City the following strengths, challenges, and opportunities/goals were identified:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Goals & Opportunities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment District • Historic District • Parks • River • Commercial • Government • Community • Churches • Interesting Housing Stock • Art • Diversion • Schools • Walkability • Strong neighborhood Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime • Drugs • Illegal • Activity • Blight • Unkempt • Vacant • Property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artist Hub • Landscaping along Amphitheater • Veteran's Memorial • Younger Population • Building Rehab - Packard Apartments • Change Perspective/ Narrative • Promotional Package for City/Marketing to Suburbs



In the North End the following strengths, challenges, and opportunities/goals were identified:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Goals & Opportunities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melting Pot • Older People with Pride in Homes • Packard Park • Walking Bridge • Millionaire's Row Houses • North End Park • Skate Park • Rich Soil • Riverwalk • NEED Good Leadership • Businesses • Community Garden • Music Hall/ Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition • Cooperation • Information Dissemination • Rentals • Delphi/GE/ Abandoned Industrial • Code Enforcement • Republic Wholesale • Paige Ave/Griswold Road Damage • Prostitution • Police Enforcement • Littering/ dumping • Blight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side Lots • Gardens • Basic Code Enforcement • Demolitions (Goal of 8)

Round 2 - How Residents Describe the Community

The following word cloud comes from the words used to describe the central city neighborhood by the residents who attended the Community Challenge meetings:



PUBLIC INPUT

Round 2 - Top Priorities

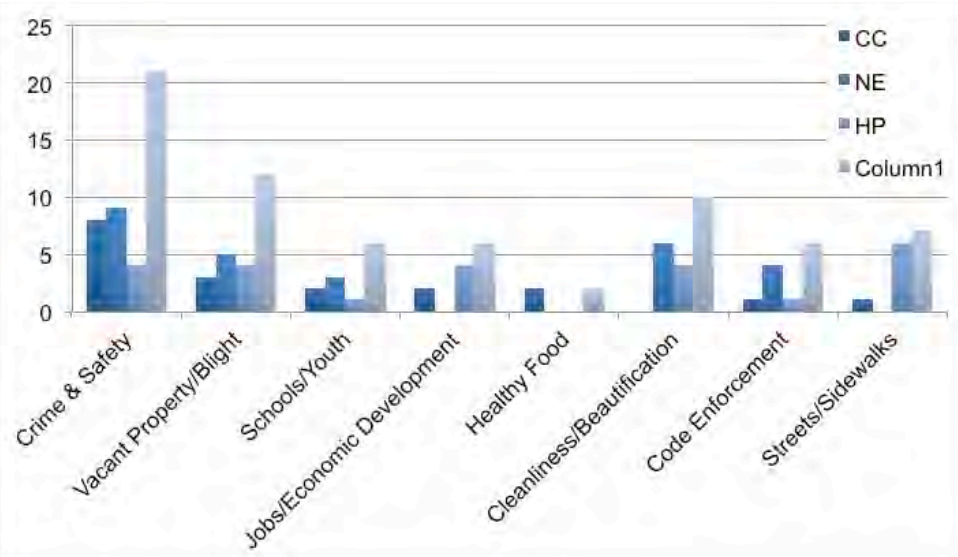
The average age of the attendees overall was 57 and the average time living in Warren was 34 years. Of those who chose to provide an answer, 16 were female and 15 were male.

When asked what they cared about most in the Valley, the top answers were Crime & Safety, Vacant Property, and Cleanliness or Beauty of the Neighborhood. Other strong priorities were Streets/Sidewalks (cleanliness and maintenance), Schools and Youth, Jobs and Economic Development, and Code Enforcement.

The top answers from the Central City were Safety & Crime, Vacant Property, Schools & Youth, Jobs, and Healthy Food. The top responses from the North End were Crime & Safety, Cleanliness & Beautification, Vacancy, Youth, and Code Enforcement. The tope answers from Historic Perkins were Streets & Sidewalks, Cleanliness, Safety, Economic Development, and Blight.

The answers to these questions are valuable in framing the goals of each neighborhood. Given that crime & safety, vacant property and cleanliness & beauty of the neighborhood are the top priorities for the residents of Central Warren, these are the concerns that should be addressed as much as possible in efforts to improve the neighborhoods. Not every effort will be able to address all of these important topics, but in order to be successful each effort should have one of these considerations at the forefront.

Top Priorities in the Valley

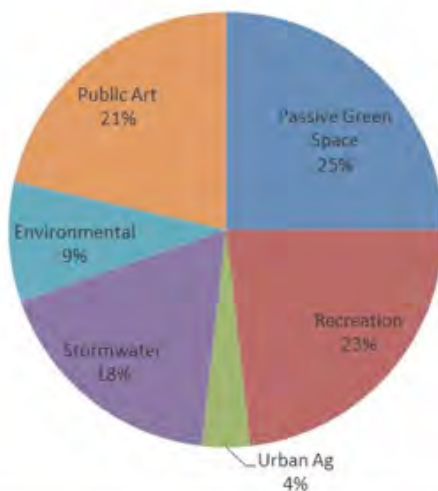


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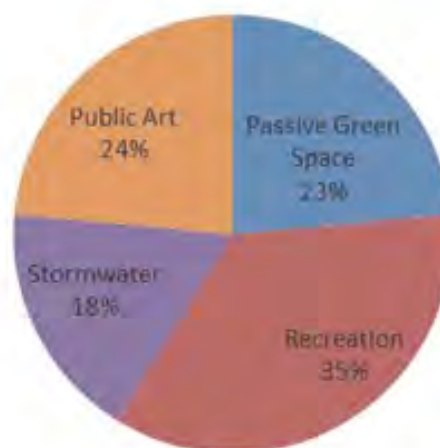
Round 2 - Interest in Land-Use Strategies

In order to assess the interest in or objection to certain ways of reusing land, residents were provided with posters illustrating six types of land reuse: Urban Agriculture, Recreation, Environmental Remediation, Passive Green Space, Public Art, and Stormwater Management. Residents were asked to indicate, using a green dot, which uses appealed to them, and using a red dot, which uses did not. In Central Warren, the largest support was for Public Art, Passive Green Space, and Recreation, with Stormwater management techniques coming in a close fourth. This trend was largely mirrored in each neighborhood. This provides some guidance in the establishment of land re-use projects throughout Central Warren.

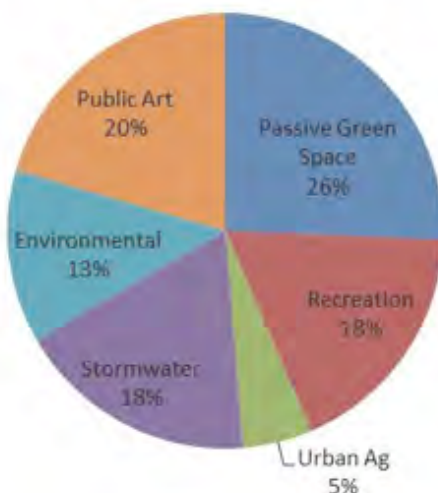
All Central Warren



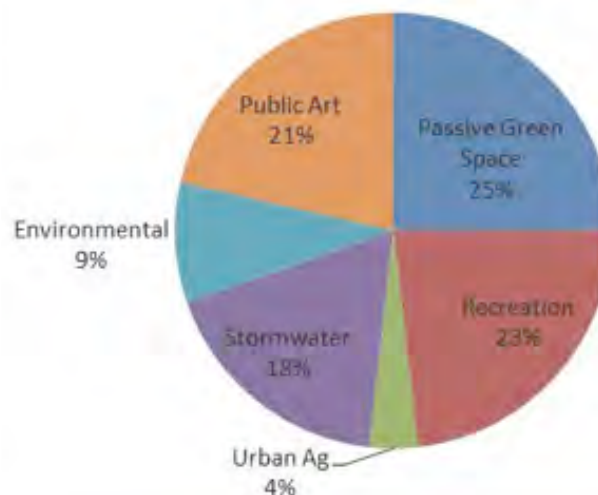
Central City



North End



Historic Perkins



PUBLIC INPUT

Round 3 - Community Designs for Vacant Spaces

During Round 3 of the Public Engagement process residents were asked to consider what they would do with vacant land if they were designing a new use for the space. Residents were divided into groups and asked to come up with a design. In the Central City neighborhood the residents who attended the meetings were interested in the possibility of rain gardens, large size yard games, and or orchards.

The following sketches illustrate some of the ideas that came from the public outreach process. Designs were provided by Haylee Martinko.

Potential Orchard



Jumbo Checkers



CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION IN WARREN

Housing Stock Inventory Grading Scale

In order to assess the full housing situation facing the city of Warren, the Warren Community Challenge Program inventoried all of the residential parcels within the city. In order to accomplish this task, TNP partnered with Youngstown State University's Center for Urban and Regional Studies to design a map that could be edited in the field through the use of the ESRI ArcGIS mapping application. This enabled data to be inputted in real time and pictures to be taken and uploaded simultaneously.

The inventory was only able to look at the exterior of each home. In order to gain as much information as possible, each element of the house was graded on an A-F scale, with "A" equating to perfect and an "F" rating meaning unsafe. The goal for occupied property was to have a complete database that allows TNP to locate properties that are potentially in need of assistance. In the future, this data will allow TNP to reach out to homeowners who may be interested in programs to paint or power wash their homes, to get new gutters, to repair a porch, etc.

For each vacant property, in addition to the grading of each element an overall grade was given to the property. These grades allow for the categorization of properties into those which are good candidates for sale or rehabilitation, those which may be salvageable, and those which are in need of immediate demolition.



A - Excellent

Landscaping/Grass
Recently cut/trimmed

Windows/Doors
Newer, clean, good trim, no cracks/missing panes

Paint/Siding
Clean, no touch-ups necessary

Gutters
Newer, clean, empty, well-maintained

Roof
Newer, no issues

Porch
Well-maintained, no touch-ups necessary

Garage
Well-maintained, no touch-ups necessary

Driveway
Well-maintained, no touch-ups necessary

**B - Good****Landscaping/Grass**

Could be mowed/
trimmed more
frequently

Windows/Doors

In good condition,
minor touch-ups, no
cracks/missing panes

Paint/Siding

Cleaning or minor
touch-ups, some paint
chipping

Gutters

Older, clean or mostly
clean

Roof

Older, no major issues

Porch

Maintained, minor
touch-ups only

Garage

Maintained, minor
touch-ups only

Driveway

Maintained, minor
touch-ups only

**C - Fair****Landscaping/Grass**

Landscape is unkempt,
needs attention

Windows/Doors

Cracked windows
present, trim cracked,
doors need repair

Paint/Siding

major painting required

Gutters

Need repair and/or are
very clogged

Roof

Deteriorating, shingles
are weathered

Porch

Needs repairs/major
paint

Garage

Needs repairs, missing
garage door

Driveway

Crumbling, major
cracks, weeds

**D - Deteriorated****Landscaping/Grass**

High grass, weeds,
overgrown foliage

Windows/Doors

Missing windows
or severely broken
windows present, trim
cracked

Paint/Siding

Major painting required,
open holes, some
siding missing

Gutters

Falling off, missing

Roof

Holes present,
shingles missing and/
or unstable, needs
replaced

Porch

Needs major repairs/
major paint

Garage

Needs major repairs

Driveway

Needs to be repaved,
overgrown

**F - Unsafe/Hazard****Landscaping/Grass**

Cannot reach doors/
see structure due
to overgrown grass/
foliage

Windows/Doors

House is completely
open

Paint/Siding

Major painting required,
major damage to walls,
significant missing
siding

Gutters

Missing

Roof

In danger of collapse

Porch

In danger of collapse

Garage

In danger of collapse

Driveway

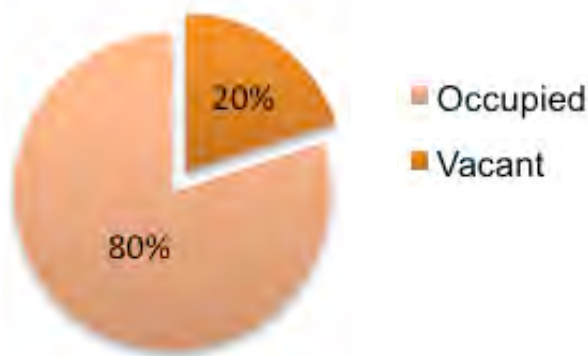
Barely visible, needs to
be repaved

CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION IN WARREN

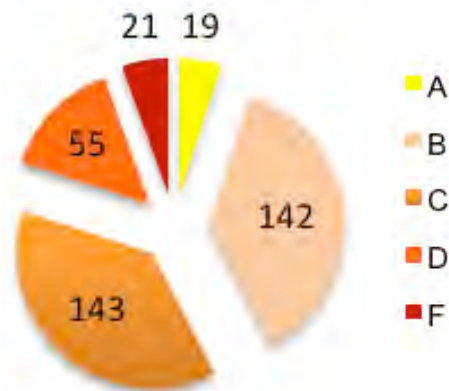
Vacancy Data

The TNP survey revealed that 20% of the housing in Central Warren is Vacant; this counts specifically parcels with structures on them. In our A-F rating scale, homes with A and B ratings are considered salvageable, C homes are considered potentially salvageable, and D and F homes are considered non-salvageable. Homes were classified as non-salvageable if a significant portion of the home was considered to need major repairs. Most notable problems of non-salvageable homes include damaged roofs, missing windows and or siding, and structural damage to porch or walls. Homes were classified as potentially salvageable if there were some major repairs needed, but the majority of exterior repairs were minor. Homes were considered salvageable if there were only minor repairs needed.

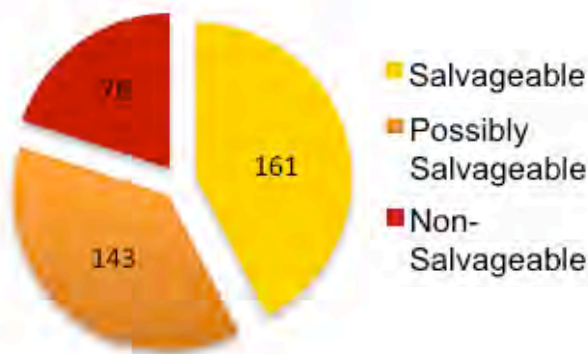
Percent Vacancy



Vacant Structures



Potential for Salvage



CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION IN WARREN

Vacancy Data

What can neighbors do if a house is in bad shape?

Step One: If property is in bad condition, report to the Warren City Health Department

Step Two: Check ownership and tax delinquency of the property on the Trumbull County Auditor’s Website. If you need assistance or property is tax delinquent, call TNP/ TCLRC at 330-469-6828.

Step Three: If property is not tax delinquent, attempt to contact owner via the address

Of the 380 vacant structures, 76 are classified as non-salvageable, also referred to as “demolition candidates,” 143 are classified as potentially salvageable, and 161 are classified as salvageable. With an average demolition cost in the Warren area at approximately \$8,000, this means a minimum of \$608,000 of investment would be needed to clear up the blight in the Central Warren. Given the lack of a housing market in Central Warren, a conservative estimate of how many “C” rated properties would need to be demolished is 50%. This puts a conservative estimate of the overall required investment to clear up the blight at \$1,180,000.

Housing Inventory Data by Neighborhood

	Central City	HPHNA	North End
Percent of Structures that are Vacant	28%	20%	16%
Vacant Parcels	37%	34%	35%
Vacant Land	14%	19%	25%
Unsalvageable Vacant Structures	23%	22%	16%
Salvageable Vacant Structures	31%	54%	51%
Possibly Salvageable Vacant Structures	46%	24%	33%

The table shows important facts uncovered by the inventory. Central City has the highest percentage of structures that are vacant, as well as the highest number of vacant parcels overall. Central City also has the highest percentage of unsalvageable properties, suggesting a greater need for demolition in this neighborhood. North End has the largest number of vacant parcels, due to a concentration of unused parcels on the northern edge of the city. Historic Perkins also has a high percentage of unsalvageable properties, though it also boasts the highest percentage of salvageable vacancies, suggesting that renovation and demolition are both highly important.

CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION IN WARREN

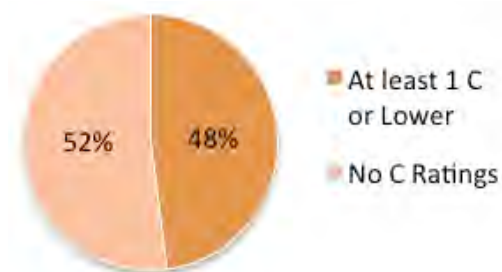
Occupied House Data

Our survey also examined occupied housing within the neighborhoods. The following chart illustrates the average ratings for each element of an occupied house within Central Warren.

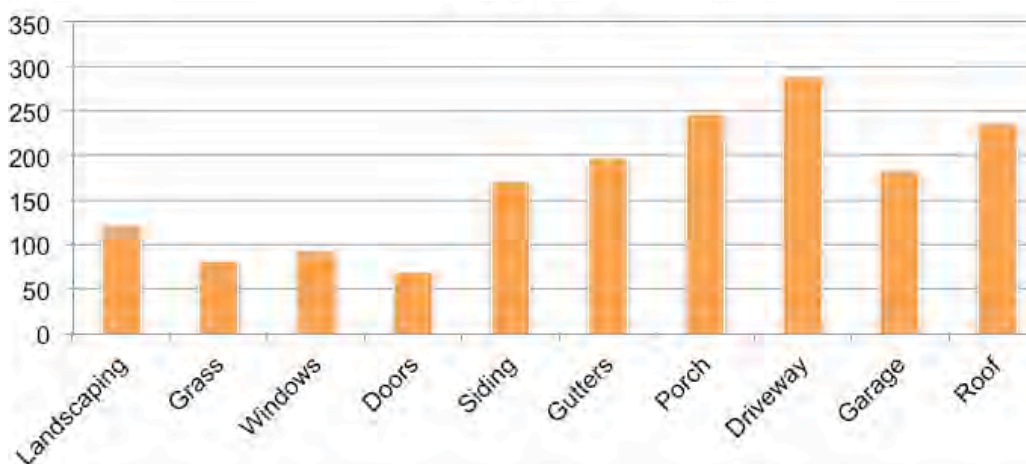
The data on occupied housing shows that 714 occupied properties received a “C” or lower on at least one element of the grading system. A “C” rating on an element indicates that a significant repair of this element is needed, or in the case of grass or landscaping that more frequent attention is needed. This means that 48% of occupied properties in Central Warren would likely benefit from increased code enforcement.

Considering siding, windows, and porch as the main elements contributing to an appearance of blight, 24% of properties in the Central Warren received a “C” or lower on at least one of these elements. Siding represents the most visible element of the exterior of the house and 12% of occupied houses in Central Warren received a rating of “C” or below on this element.

Homes Benefiting from Code Enforcement



Number of Houses with C or Lower Rating in Each Category



NEIGHBORHOOD CATEGORIZATIONS

Defining Designation Categories

For the purpose of providing the most comprehensive recommendations for each neighborhood, as pertains to its particular challenges and opportunities, this plan divides neighborhoods into four possible categories.

When the Poggymeyer Design group created the 2009 Revitalization Strategy, they used four different designations, this plan also uses four designations, but with slightly different names. In this way, the following designations mirror those in the 2009 Revitalization, but remain distinct for the purpose of clarity between plans. In addition these designations mirror those of the OFHA NIP program.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Neighborhood(s)</i>
<i>Healthy</i>	Community Challenge Inventory showed less than 5% vacancy, and minimal repairs needed on occupied homes. Additionally a healthy neighborhood shows some movement in the housing market and sales that, at minimum, occur at a value higher than \$30,000.	No neighborhoods in Central Warren met the definition for Healthy Neighborhoods.
<i>Improvement</i>	Improvement neighborhoods are those neighborhoods where vacancy is below 10%, and minimal repairs are needed on occupied homes.	No neighborhoods in Central Warren met the definition for Improvement Neighborhoods.
<i>Revitalization</i>	Revitalization Neighborhoods are those neighborhoods where vacancy is between 10% and 15% and repairs are needed on many occupied homes.	No neighborhoods in Central Warren met the definition for Revitalization Neighborhoods.
<i>Redevelopment</i>	Redevelopment Neighborhoods are those neighborhoods where vacancy is above 15% and repairs are needed on many occupied homes OR where vacant land exceeds 33% of the available parcels.	North End, Central City, and Historic Perkins all fall within the Redevelopment designation, due to their high vacancy rates.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All residents should feel safe in their neighborhood

Property Stabilization (Short Term)

High Priority for Redevelopment Neighborhoods: All Central Warren

Safety is a primary concern in high-demolition need neighborhoods. Vacant properties attract criminal activity and thus pose a safety risk for the neighborhood.

Properties vacant in the Central Warren neighborhoods need to be immediately boarded and secured, to prevent the breaking of windows and the entry of unwanted persons.

Properties should be boarded using techniques that make an effort to keep up neighborhood aesthetics. When possible doors and windows need to be boarded from the inside of the property, this looks much less disordered than boarding from the outside, additionally it is more difficult for others to remove the boards. Painting of boards can help improve the aesthetics. Boards can be brightly painted adding an artistic element to the neighborhood, or they can be painted black and given accents to appear more similar to windows.



GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All residents should feel safe in their neighborhood

Demolition (Short Term)

High Priority for Redevelopment Neighborhoods: All Central Warren

In the residential neighborhoods of Central blight is a pressing concern. A significant proportion of the vacant properties are unsalvageable, and due to the high percentage of vacant properties there is little movement in the housing market. A primary goal must be to stabilize the neighborhood and reduce the number of vacant houses.

This process is already underway and has been assisted by the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), Ohio's Moving Ohio Forward Program, and Ohio's Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP).

The Community Challenge Program was collecting supporting data and providing strategic planning throughout the MOF and NIP. Conversations with residents and city officials, along with data collected through the Community Challenge Property Inventory helped establish several priority concerns and from those priority concerns, priority designations were given to certain areas. Priority concerns are as follows: Health and Safety, Proximity to Schools or other Neighborhood Assets, Corridors and Concentration of Blight. A set of 10 priority areas were identified using these categories to establish



GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All residents should feel safe in their neighborhood

Demolition (Short Term) - Continued

a priority order. One of these priority areas was centered around Willard school, in the Southeast.

Moving forward, these priorities should continue to inform the strategies for demolition in the City of Warren. When an overwhelming safety concern exists, the property should be immediately demolished with available funds. If no such overwhelming concern exists, then the second consideration should be the currently established priority area designations used by the Trumbull County Land Bank. Remaining properties should be evaluated to see if they are near to significant assets, corridors (or other major thoroughfares), or if they are within pre-existing concentrations of blight. The diagram on page 26 illustrates the flow of these considerations.

The NIP program is currently demolishing houses through Ohio's County Land Banks. The Trumbull County Land Bank secured 3.2 Million dollars through this program to demolish blighted properties throughout the county, with a focus on Warren City. These properties must be blighted tax foreclosures that enter Land Bank ownership. Most of the blighted properties in the Southeast are eligible for this program, but some properties do not meet the tax foreclosure requirements and will therefore not be able to be demolished with these funds. During the process of identifying eligible properties for NIP funding, a number of properties were not tax delinquent. Others may fall slightly outside the priority areas. Additional funds are needed to address the abatement of these nuisance properties through city means.

Policy Recommendation:

As different municipalities consider creating funds for demolition, Warren officials and residents should be participating in state and local government conversations about demolition funding. Warren should keep an eye out for successful models in Ohio, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, where many legacy cities are facing the same challenges.

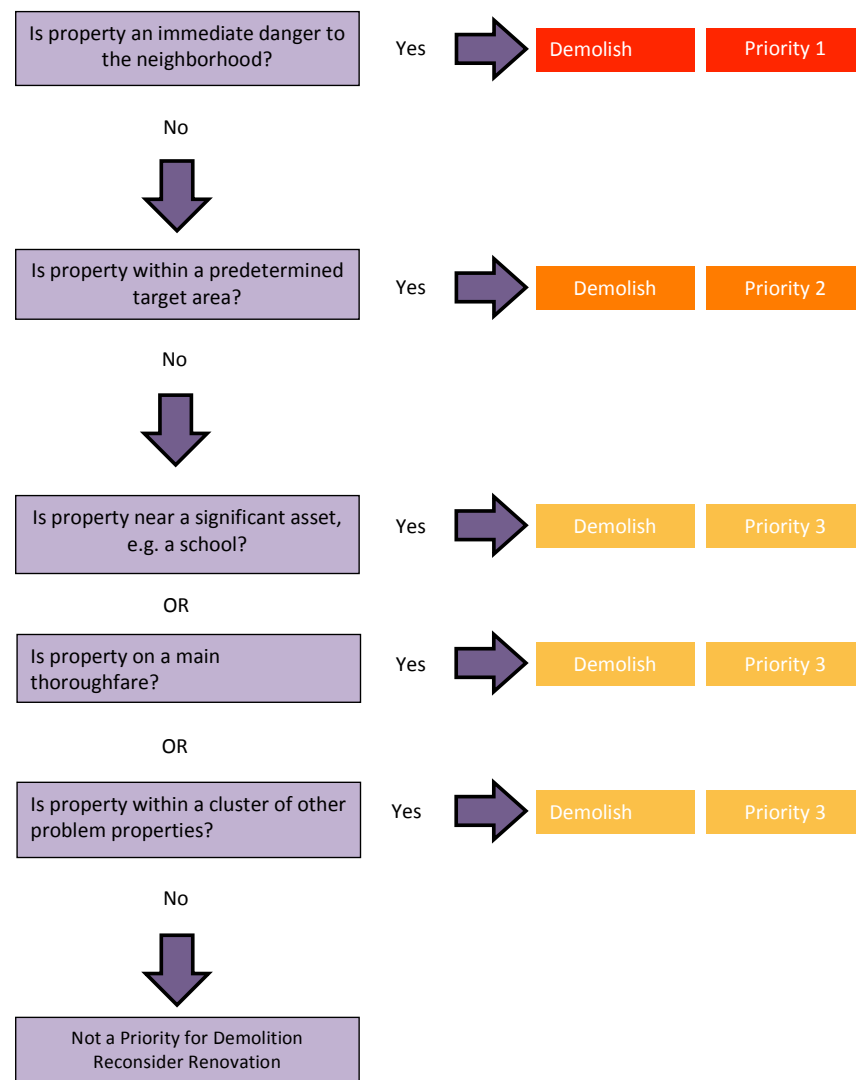
Objective	Expected Outcome	Implementation
Secure all vacant properties	Decrease in criminal activity	Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership COCS Program and Volunteers
Strategic Demolition of tax delinquent properties through the Trumbull County Land Bank	Increased property values, improved safety and stability of neighborhoods	In 2015-2016 utilize NIP funding to complete necessary demolitions. Following the expenditure of those funds, seek additional funding for land bank demolitions
Strategic Demolition of non-tax delinquent properties	Increased property values, improved safety and stability of neighborhoods	City of Warren
Demolition Fund	Faster Demolition of problem properties	City Council should allocate funding for demolitions.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All residents should feel safe in their neighborhood

Demolition Guidelines Decision Tree

We recommend that the city consider creating a demolition fund, to be used on properties which are not eligible for NIP. Even a small amount of money could mean the difference between a stable block, and a blighted one. Because the Land Bank currently has money to demolish land bank owned properties, the city should prioritize properties that are non-salvageable, but are not tax delinquent. We further recommend that the City Health Department create a priority list, above and beyond the current “Board Ordered Demolition List” that addresses homes that pose the most significant risk to health and safety.



GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All vacant green spaces should be productive and beneficial to the community

Side Lots (Short Term)

Medium Priority for Redevelopment Neighborhoods: All Central Warren

Where possible, vacant lots should be sold to adjacent property owners through the Trumbull County Land Bank and the City of Warren Land Bank. If a property is tax delinquent, it should be foreclosed on so that it may enter the Trumbull County Land Bank. If a property is not tax delinquent, an effort should be made to contact the current property owner and attempt to broker a sale of the lot or surrender into the Trumbull County Land Bank.

Residents in each community should be made aware of the process to have a property taken over by the Trumbull County Land Bank. This information should be made readily available on the health department page of the city's website. When complaints are made regarding a property this information should be shared between the City of Warren health department, Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership, The Trumbull County Land Bank, and the relevant neighborhood group.

The maintenance of vacant property within the City of Warren needs to be a shared responsibility.

If a vacant property is left too long without being cared for, it becomes more difficult to fix. Trash and debris can create obstacles for mowing, as can larger vegetation. Community members should attempt to maintain vacant property where possible.

The city could assess fees for mowing properties onto the tax bill; this would assist in foreclosure proceedings so that the property may be taken in by the land bank and transferred to a responsible owner. Additionally, the city should explore possibilities for assessing fees for maintenance even when that maintenance is performed by a neighborhood association or community group.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All vacant green spaces should be productive and beneficial to the community

Lot Greening (Short Term)

High Priority for Redevelopment Neighborhoods: All Central Warren

Studies, including “More Than Just an Eyesore: Local Insights on Vacant Land and Urban Health” published in J Urban Health (Garvin et al.), have shown that greening of vacant lots reduces property crimes and makes residents feel safer in their communities. Given the already high concentration of vacant land in Central Warren, the high need for demolition, and the low property values and sales in the neighborhood, greening spaces will become an important aspect to creating safer neighborhoods.

A large portion of the Central City has been dubbed the “Garden District” and has used the principle of greening lots to improve the neighborhood. With everything from full lot wildflowers to public art displays, to gardens for children, residents and local volunteers have begun to change the landscape of this neighborhood through lot greening. These projects have largely used grass roots fundraising, with the occasional grant, to make huge changes to the landscape.



The above is just one of the many examples of how greening can make a huge difference. The lot at the corner of Mercer and Vine once held a large, deteriorating, vacant structure that was boarded up and falling apart. Now, children come to that same space during the summer and learn how to tend garden beds.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All vacant green spaces should be productive and beneficial to the community

Lot Greening (Short Term) - Continued

Currently, through the Neighborhood Initiative Program being run by OHFA, there is money available for the greening of vacant lots following demolitions. Using this money is a critical way to ensure that newly vacant lots do not contribute to falling property values or crime in the neighborhood. TNP has organized the use of these funds through the Lots to Love Program.

The Lots to Love Program should be actively utilized by residents in the Central City. This program provides for the installation of greening projects including, but not limited to, gardens, pocket parks, recreation spaces, and rain gardens. Through the program, residents agree to be responsible for the maintenance of the lots, in exchange for the investment of the installation. As more residents begin to see the value of these community spaces, that will encourage continued investment.

Several projects have already been planned in the Central City as part of these efforts. The Community Challenge outreach revealed that the most support exists for passive green space, public art, and recreation in Central Warren. These uses should be encouraged.

Policy Recommendation:

To protect current community gardens and other green spaces, and to encourage further development of such spaces, the City should adopt an urban agriculture/green space land use.

Objective	Expected Outcome	Implementation
Place vacant lots back on tax roll through ownership	Increased tax revenue, blight elimination	Greater publicity of Land Bank and related efforts
Increase number of vacant lots that are "greened"	Improved safety and stability of neighborhoods	TNP Lots to Love program
Increase number of community gardens	Increased property values, improved safety and stability of neighborhoods	TNP GROW Program
Urban Agriculture Zoning	Improved access to funding for urban agriculture, simplify procedures for urban gardeners	Create urban agriculture land use designation and garden district

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal: All neighborhoods should have involved residents who can assist in finding solutions to community concerns

Increase Neighborhood Engagement (Short & Long Term)

High Priority for All Neighborhoods

Raymond John Wean Foundation

Neighborhood SUCCESS and Leadership Program Emerging leaders from Neighborhood SUCCESS will build fundamental leadership skills with an intentional focus on Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and understanding the dynamics of race, class, power, gender and age. Visit www.rjweanfdn.org for more information.

A common concern during our public engagement process was that many residents were apathetic and unlikely to become engaged. The Historic Perkins Homestead Neighborhood Association is a very active group. They keep an eye on the neighborhood and have regular meetings and events. In the North End, there is a neighborhood association, North End Environmental Development (NEED), which has become less active in recent years. The Central City briefly had a neighborhood association, but it has since disbanded. Residents in the North End and in the Central City should work to reestablish their neighborhood associations. Residents of these areas should take advantage of local trainings provided by the Wean Foundation and by MVOC and to seek out additional learning opportunities for how to better engage other residents. During the public engagement process the vast majority of attendees were over 50 years of age. It is critical that a younger population become engaged to support the neighborhood. Neighborhood Associations should plan events with specific youth focus or youth elements. TNP and MVOC can play a role in supporting these events and advertising them through social media. Additionally, youth should be given leadership responsibilities and help in decision making for groups.

Many attendees at the Community Challenge outreach meetings were unaware of the neighborhood associations in their own neighborhoods. These meetings were a great opportunity to help connect people with their neighborhood associations, but greater effort should be made to improve the visibility of the neighborhood associations. Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership should seek to continue public engagement efforts and to work with neighborhood associations to help increase attendance. The Warren Neighborhood Leadership Council has stopped meeting regularly, which inhibits neighborhood groups from finding out what is going on in other neighborhoods. This group should reorganize and continue to meet, so that the neighborhood associations can assist one another.

Objective	Expected Outcome	Implementation
Improve Leadership	Engage more people on an ongoing basis in the community	Wean Foundation Neighborhood SUCCESS and Leadership Program, MVOC and OOC Leadership Trainings
Engage more young people	Increased capacity for neighborhood groups	Plan youth oriented events, engage youth in decision making
Increase visibility of Neighborhood Organizations	Increased capacity for neighborhood groups	Revive WNLC, host networking evenings

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal - All neighborhoods should have housing that is well maintained

Vacant Property Registration and Foreclosure Bond

High Priority for All Neighborhoods

The City of Warren enacted vacant property and foreclosure bond legislation that has, up to this point in time, been underutilized. The legislation mandates that owners of vacant property register the property within 30 days of it becoming vacant. It further mandates that banks who foreclose on a property put up a \$10,000 bond to be available to the City of Warren should any steps need to be taken to maintain or secure the property, up to and including demolition of the property. In other cities this type of legislation has been successful and has provided a cushion of available funding for many foreclosed properties. Warren has not been able to commit the necessary time towards making this legislation effective.

The City of Warren needs to review the process for securing the bonds associated with the legislation. One person in the health department or Mayor's office should be responsible for contact with Banks and securing appropriate paperwork. The bond registry should be updated monthly. Banks who have not complied should be notified monthly.

Owners of any properties that are brought to the attention of the City via regular inspections, complaints, or partnerships with neighborhood associations should be notified quarterly that they are in violation of the vacant property registration.

In Ohio, the City of Youngstown has been the most effective at enforcing their foreclosure bond legislation. The City of Warren should work with Youngstown to understand best practices for enforcement and increase compliance with the law.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal - All neighborhoods should have housing that is well maintained

Code Enforcement Part 1 (Short Term)

High Priority for Redevelopment Neighborhoods: All Central Warren

Example:

The City of Arvada Colorado trains "Citizen Inspectors" to understand the code compliance process and those citizens are allowed to "patrol" the neighborhood for code violations and begin the compliance process

The city, neighborhood associations, and community organizations should work together to enhance code enforcement efforts within the City of Warren. While complaint-driven, reactive code enforcement techniques function well in areas with low vacancy and majority well-maintained property, proactive approaches to abate code violations are necessary in areas with high vacancy and low maintenance standards.

Given limited resources, efforts to improve code enforcement should take advantage of the presence of engaged neighborhood associations and community members.

The city has a great resource on their webpage called "Whose Job Is It in The City of Warren" This flyer shows who to call when various problems arise in the community. Many neighborhood associations already share this information, but more should make this flyer available and should make sure that new residents have this information as well.

During the public outreach process, many residents expressed concerns that they do not feel that reporting problems results in action taken. A potential solution to this problem is to involve the community in patrolling for and or reporting code violations in an organized manor. Some communities have taken to allowing citizens to begin the compliance process through sending notices. Only after these notices are ignored do the citizens then need to refer the case to code enforcement officials. The City has done an excellent job providing Community Policing training to community members; code enforcement training could operate in much the same way.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal - All neighborhoods should have housing that is well maintained

Code Enforcement Part 1 (Short Term)- Continued

Public shaming is another tactic used by many cities, particularly to encourage compliance by notorious slumlords within the city. Many cities have brought together a variety of community stakeholders to identify the most notorious owners of derelict or noncompliant investment properties (slumlords). Then they develop agreements with the judicial branch, federal agencies like HUD, and banks, to participate in aggressive enforcement of code violations. The “Most Wanted” list is circulated via the press, the city website, and other entities. Every department with the authority to inspect the property then does so within a short timeframe and all aggressively cite violations. Findings and progress are reported to the press.

When dealing with owner-occupants of properties it is likely that code violation results from a lack of knowledge about repairs, rather than a willful desire not to fix the problem. The city should consider creating a “resource guide” to be provided to code violators with information on how to fix the violation. This could include listings of lawn and tree service companies, towing services, junk removal, property maintenance procedures, etc.

Example:

The City of Toledo “Dirty Dozen” The City of Toledo identifies 12 property owners that are contributing to blight in a neighborhood. They then used targeted enforcement of as many agencies as possible to cite violations. Location, picture, and name of owner are provided to the media and placed on the city’s website. Funding was provided by Department of Neighborhoods, The Department of Economic Development, The Nuisance Abatement Trust Fund, and other federal agencies.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal - All neighborhoods should have housing that is well maintained

Code Enforcement Part 2

High Priority for All Neighborhoods

Another concern expressed by residents and an issue that came up during the research process for the Community Challenge Project is a lack of modernization in the procedures for addressing code violations and for getting information regarding rental registry, condemned and boarded ordered property. The City currently works with New World Systems, using their LOGOS.net software in several departments. This company provides an excellent Community Development software package that would allow for different departments to work together and share information quickly and easily. This software also has the option for community access to certain information. Through this software citizens would have the opportunity to see, for example, if a citation had been issued to a specific property owner, if that property was either condemned or board ordered, etc. The city should purchase and utilize this software for better internal and external communication. As an added bonus, the information from this Community Challenge property survey could be integrated into the software, so that city officials could see the data alongside their own. The data collected includes ratings of various aspects of housing, from the porch to the roof. Ratings of C or lower indicate a potential code violation. This data can be used as a basis for an efficient windshield survey or similar effort to quickly obtain a list of violators from whom to encourage compliance.

Objective	Expected Outcome	Implementation
Increase Community Involvement In Code Enforcement	Reduce burden on City, increased compliance	Train citizens in code enforcement and establish procedure for citizen citation of violations
Create High Visibility of Repeat Violators	Increase compliance by repeat violators	Create a "Most Wanted" list: aggressively cite properties, publicize owner names, etc.
Improve Knowledge and Ability to Fix Violations	Increased compliance	Create and distribute "resource guide."

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal - All neighborhoods should have housing that is well maintained

Rehabilitation (Long Term)

High Priority for All Neighborhoods Long Term

Medium Priority for Redevelopment Neighborhoods Short Term: All Central Warren

When possible, properties that are salvageable and marketable should be rehabilitated. Given the low market value of properties in Central Warren, particular attention should be paid to costs of rehabilitation versus demolition. If property cannot be sold for renovation to an owner-occupant or responsible investor, demolitions should be considered. The Trumbull County Land Bank already operates with distinct attention paid to the ability of the purchaser to renovate the property and with preference for owner occupants. Other programs, if established, should also operate under these parameters to avoid negligent investors.

Rehabilitation in Central Warren must currently be considered on a case by case basis. Many of the properties in Central Warren will not be able to be sold for more than the cost of their renovation. For this reason, rehabilitation is a long-term goal in the Central Warren. Over the next two years, the demolition and greening of the neighborhoods will help to stabilize the neighborhood property values. Rehabilitation of property is much more likely to be successful following these efforts, and will become a stronger priority as the neighborhood becomes more stable.

Objective	Expected Outcome	Implementation
Increase homeownership	Increased tax base, improved neighborhood vibrancy	Prioritize and incentivize owner-occupants
Renovate and sell tax-foreclosed properties	Increased tax base, improved neighborhood vibrancy	Land Bank facilitates sale to owners with agreement for complete renovation of property
Renovate and sell all vacant properties	Increased tax base, improved neighborhood vibrancy	Demolition and greening of worst properties to stabilize neighborhood, increase viability of investments

