

Executive Summary

The Bryant School Neighborhood, with a total population of 589 persons, is a small residential community located in the northwest section of Flint, Michigan in Genesee County. The target area covers approximately two square miles. The target area has been identified as a desirable location for redevelopment and revitalization. The Genesee County Land Bank enlisted the services of students from the Michigan State University Urban and Regional Planning Program to gather current housing data and other statistical information in order to offer evidence to support rehabilitation projects in the future. The Genesee County Land Bank was established to empower county governments with the ability to use tax-foreclosed properties as an asset in community redevelopment, and it is the purpose of this report to present quantitative data to support such initiatives.

This study focuses on exploring options for the utilization of unoccupied properties in the area, discusses the current housing situation and socioeconomic characteristics of the Bryant Neighborhood, and provides a number of suggested goals and directions for the community. Citizen participation was accounted for during the course of the study. During the month of February, a community focus group was held at the Bryant Elementary School in the target neighborhood in order to create Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis.

Upon completion of the meeting, the following highlights were compiled to further describe the S.W.O.T. for the neighborhood:

Strengths:

- Joint problem solving between the citizens and the police
- Stable homeowners
- Bryant School funding

Weaknesses:

- Abandoned homes
- High Unemployment
- Soft law enforcement

Opportunities:

- Pierson School
- New development
- City park

Threats:

- Persistent crime
- Structural Deterioration
- Lack of local support

To determine the condition of each existing structure, a housing condition survey was conducted within the area. Each property received a score based upon a rating system. Scores for features such as the exterior structure and the roof of the building were weighted considering their significance to the integrity of the entire structure. Features such as doors, windows, and the finish were considered but not weighted.

Although many homes in this neighborhood are in need of serious attention, majority of the properties scored in either the “good” or “fair” categories, equivalent to 84% of the homes.

After analyzing the tax status of each property within the area, it was found that the Genesee County Land Bank currently owns 26 properties in the target area. The Land Bank will receive an estimated 17 more properties due to tax foreclosure in 2005, thus giving them a total of 43 properties within the Bryant School Neighborhood.

Based upon the research conducted during the course of this project, this report focuses upon the target area's principal interest of revitalizing the neighborhood as a whole. To achieve the proposed task of community redevelopment the Bryant School Neighborhood should consider the following recommendations:

1. Continue to utilize existing programs
 - a. Weed and Seed
 - i. A neighborhood restoration strategy with funding provided by the federal government to further neighborhood stability.
 - b. Flint NIPP (Neighborhood Improvement and Preservation Project), Inc
 - i. The redevelopment of at least five residential units in the next one to four years.
2. New development initiatives
 - a. Streetscape and Park restoration
 - i. Could prove beneficial to the aesthetics
 - ii. Could also improve attractiveness to potential homebuyers
 - iii. This may help to restore a sense of safety within the area.
 - b. Pierson School redevelopment
 - i. Currently an unoccupied building sits on the lot.
 - ii. This is a central location for the target area
 - iii. It could also play an active and positive role in the strengthening of the community.

The continual support provided by the current and proposed community programs should aid the overall outlook for the target area.

With the implementation of the recommendations provided to the community, the physical and social environments within the community have the potential to be greatly improved for the neighborhood and residents residing within.