



WEST *pond* MICRONEIGHBORHOOD

Reinvestment Proposal

SYRACUSE'S NORTHSIDE

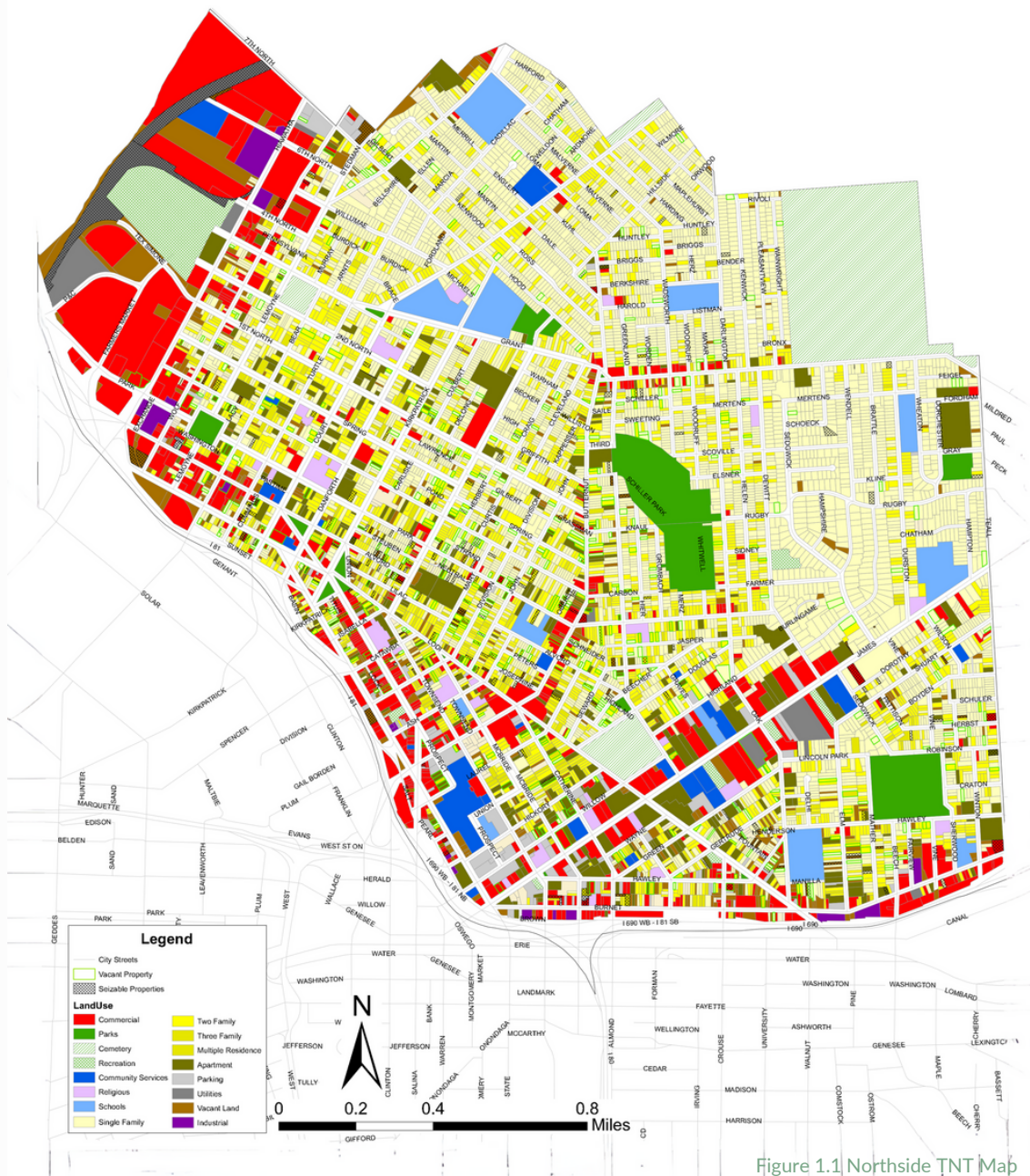


Figure 1.1 Northside TNT Map

Source Tomorrows Neighborhoods Today Website. Sector 7 - Northside. <http://www.tomorrowsneighborhoodtoday.org/northside>. Accessed 12 Nov 2023.

The Northside Sector

Syracuse’s Northside Sector is the portion of the city north of I-690, east of I-81, south of the city’s boundaries, and west of Teall Ave. Its residents are predominately a part of the Syracuse Common Council 1st District and of the City’s TNT (Tomorrow’s Neighborhoods Today) Sector 7 - Northside.

Syracuse Northside’s Neighborhood

While many refer to the “Northside” as a neighborhood itself, included within this geography are actually several microneighborhoods, some official and some unofficial, including:

- Court Woodlawn
- Washington Square
- West Pond*
- East Pond*
- Schiller Park*
- Prospect Hill
- Hawley Green
- Lincoln Hill
- Sedgwick Farms

* Portions of those marked with an asterisk are also considered part of the Danforth | Pond | Butternut area

OUR MICRONEIGHBORHOOD OF FOCUS

WEST POND



Figure 1.2 West Pond Microneighborhood Map

Our Focus Microneighborhood

This proposal is particularly focused on the microneighborhood of West Pond, referring to the neighborhood blocks bounded by I-81 | Kirkpatrick St | Park St | Franklin Elementary - Ash St. It is bounded by Washington Square to the north, East Pond to the east, Schiller Park to the south, and Franklin Square/Lakefront to the west.



The Land on and of Which We Live

The land that Syracuse's Northside has been built upon was originally the land of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Onondaga Nation, the People of the Longhouse. As local, Haudenosaunee artist Brandon Lazore shares in his history-telling through art and narrative, this longhouse refers both to physical structures, as well as their model of governance, in which they continuously expanded their confederacy to embrace more peoples. Their Great Law of Peace is said to have played a key role in the formation of the United States' nascent nationhood, including the balance of power among different branches of government. As we seek to reinvest in these lands, we celebrate the roots of the Haudenosaunee in the soil and the fruits that their ancestral and current presence still bear out. We lament the traumatic displacement of the Onondaga Nation from these lands and the ways in which they were forced to flee as refugees by colonization and annexation. We respectfully learn from Haudenosaunee practices, in hopes of rebuilding proverbial longhouses today where equity and balance of power that benefits all are redeemed.

Euro-American Colonization

Following the migration of Europeans to the American shores, lands began to be annexed by the Euro-American colonists. The Haudenosaunee lands now referred to as Central New York were claimed by New France in the eyes of Europe until 1763, and began to see Euro-American colonization throughout the 18th and 19th centuries as the salt industry rapidly attracted resettlers to the "Salt City." This included former New York soldiers in Washington's Continental Army, who acquired the land that had been annexed by the infant United States Government. In 1825, the Erie Canal was completed, running right through the heart of Syracuse, driving growth and its forthcoming expansion to being a City in March 1870.

Generations of Many Nations

The Northside itself began to be constructed in its current form in the mid-1800s, with most of the initial resettlers of the West Pond Microneighborhood being German immigrants and their descendants. Italian immigrants began arriving after 1883 and grew to be the dominant group in the area around North Salina St. by the 1930s. Between 1930 and 1980 nearly all residents of the neighborhood were counted by the Census as White and of European ancestry, and the percentage of foreign-born residents decreased. The housing stock declined, and the population slowly shrunk from over 21,000 people in 1930 to about 12,000 people in 2000, with factors such as racial redlining and white flight at play. The neighborhood's demographics began to change in the 1980s as Syracuse welcomed refugees from Southeast Asia and other parts of the world. Between 1990 and 2020 the percent of foreign born neighborhood residents grew from 9% to 36%. During this time most of this population came from Asian and African countries, which changed the racial composition of the neighborhood significantly. In 2020, approximately 71% of residents identified as Black, Asian, Hispanic, multiple races, or some other race. Our heritage as home to generations of many nations is found in layer after layer of the local narrative and continues to live into this identity today.

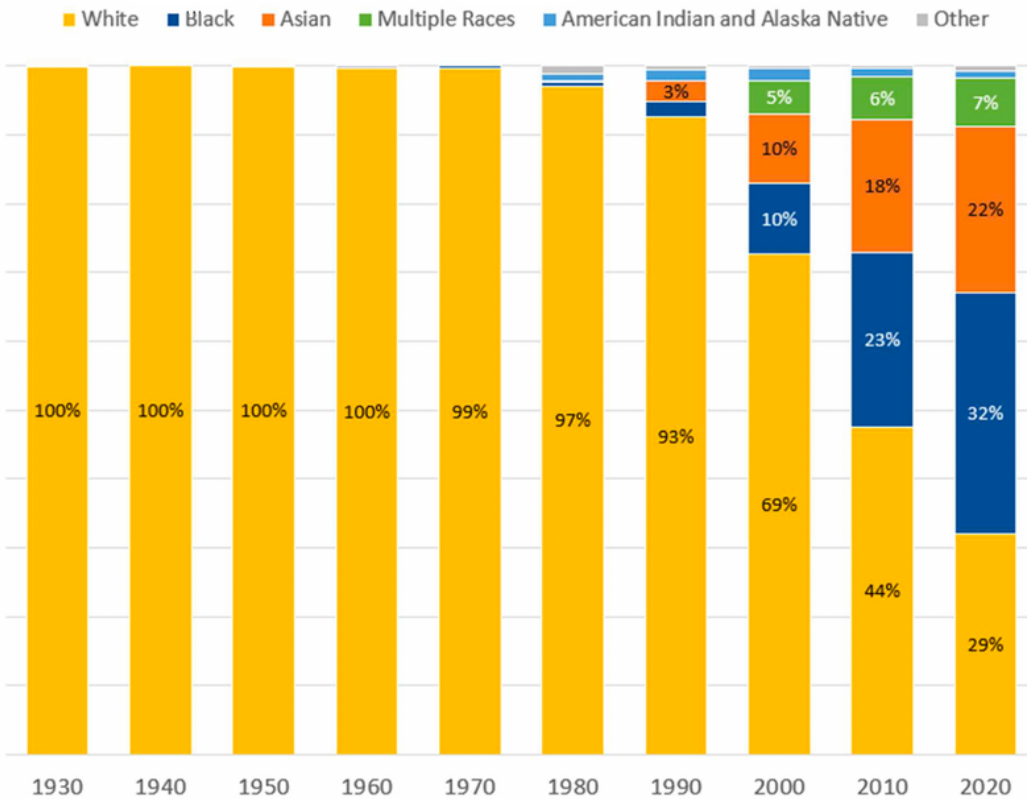


Figure 1.3 Decennial Census Data on Residents of the Northside Microneighborhood by Race, 1930-2020
 Source: Northside Microneighborhood History, Mary Carney Consulting, November 2023..

Today’s Peoples of the West Pond Microneighborhood

Due to the nature of U.S. immigration policies and global affairs, the continental and cultural backgrounds of those resettling in Syracuse Northside’s West Pond Microneighborhood have changed dramatically over the last 40 years. As exemplified in Figure 1.2, after decades of post-colonial resettlers coming from various European nations, the neighborhood increasingly became home to resettlers coming from Asia, Africa, and South America as well.

An Increasingly Diverse Community

The increased diversity does not stop at a continent level but expands even further to a national and tribal level. Today in the Syracuse City School District, there are 70+ languages spoken, and nearly all of them are represented on Syracuse’s Northside. The majority of the approximately 36% of residents who are ‘foreign-born’ per 2020 Census data came to the U.S. through the U.S. State Department’s Refugee Resettlement Program, via its three local Syracuse affiliates. See Figure 1.3 for a list of some of the nations our new neighbors are coming from (not comprehensive). Note that many of those who resettled in Syracuse with heritage from these nations were born and/or spent significant portions of their life in other nations as asylum seekers and refugees such as Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Jordan, Turkey, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Bangladesh.

- RESETTLING IN SYRACUSE FROM
- Afghanistan
 - Bhutan/Nepal
 - Bosnia
 - Burma/Myanmar
 - Burundi
 - Central African Republic
 - Columbia
 - Cuba
 - Democratic Republic of Congo
 - El Salvador
 - Eritrea
 - Ethiopia
 - Guatemala
 - Haiti
 - Honduras
 - Iran
 - Iraq
 - Liberia
 - Nicaragua
 - Palestine
 - Rwanda
 - Somalia
 - South Sudan
 - Sri Lanka
 - Sudan
 - Syria
 - Tibet
 - Ukraine
 - Venezuela
 - Vietnam
 - ... and more

Figure 1.3 Partial Nation Heritage List



Born in the U.S.A.

The approximately 64% of neighborhood residents who were born in the United States are a diverse lineup of three primary groups. The first are second-generation Americans, being raised by first-generation parents from the same myriad of cultures and languages spoken of previously. The second are Black/African Generational Americans whose ancestors were brought predominately to the American shores through chattel slavery; families migrated north to Central New York from the Jim Crow Era Southeastern U.S. as part of the Great Migration. The third are descendants of previous waves of immigrants resettling from the area from Germany, Italy, Ireland, and other European nations.

CULTURAL ARTS & HISTORIC DISTRICT

Establishing a Cultural Arts and Historic District

With this beautiful tapestry of cultural diversity and all that these cultures and peoples bring us, we believe this community wealth ought to be more prominent and accessible. Especially as the majority of residents in our community were forced to resettle due to displacement, a sense of home and knownness is all the more powerful. As a part of this proposal, we would like to see the West Pond Microneighborhood populated with culturally inspired public art crafted by local artists, that cultivates a sense of home and knownness to their kindred people and invites those from other cultures to co-learn via the Northside Art Trail. Additionally, we propose to build on the existing North Salina Historic District, per the National Trust of Historic Places, to identify, establish, and permanently mark other key historic locations throughout the West Pond neighborhood that reflect the layers of history and culture in our community story. One such example might be the German family laundry turned boxing gym turned multicultural mosque at 507 Pond Street.

Strategic Focus Areas for Reinvestment

While the strengthening and celebrating of community identity are crucial elements in a reinvestment effort, we have spent several years of boots on the ground, door-to-door canvassing to talk with neighbors about where they believe reinvestment ought to be allocated, that they and their families might prosper in place. This has led to three strategic focus areas for proposed reinvestment in the West Pond Microneighborhood.



Public Spaces for the Public Good

- Public Parks
- Public Streets/Sidewalks/Right-of-Way
- Community Centers
- Community Gardens
- Public Art Installations



Right-Sized Housing

- Affordability
- Physical Space
- Proximity
- Quality
- Safety



Business Development as Resource Access

- For-Profit Businesses
- Not-for-Profit Organizations
- Social Enterprises

A Reinvestment Proposal

These three strategic focus areas are the primary focus of the remainder of this proposal. Included in each section are an overview of the issues these strategic reinvestment areas are seeking to address, and proposed interventions and sustainable solutions to be implemented. The final section of the proposal outlines how the West Pond Alliance, to be launched in May 2024, is staging up to be a resource for advocates and investors, with a special interest in local residents and social entrepreneurs.

Equity in I-81 Development

Safe Routes to School

Comprehensive Implementation of Sidewalk and Snow Removal Programs

Lodi Triangle

PUBLIC

VEO Hubs

Municipal Litter Cleanup

Improved Access to Transportation Hubs

SPACES

Maximized Community Gardens

Catawba Street Connector

FOR THE

Speed Hump at 5-Way Intersection

PUBLIC

Community Event Venue

Parking Enforcement

Bus Shelters

GOOD

Public Facilities

Dedicated Bike/Scooter Infrastructure

Linguistic Access throughout Neighborhood Businesses and Resources

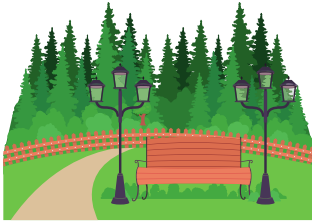
Information Equity

Public Cultural Art

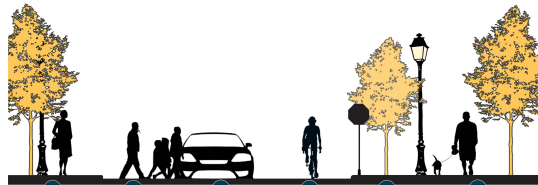
PUBLIC
SPACE

FOR
THE

PUBLIC
GOOD



PUBLIC
PARKS
& GREEN
SPACES



PUBLIC
STREETS
SIDEWALKS
RIGHT-OF-WAY



OPEN
TO
THE
PUBLIC

Defining Public Good

Our desire for these public spaces is that they would be activated in ways that are for the public good, in other words, for the benefit or well-being of the public. The particular public we are concerned with in these proposals are the residents and stakeholders of the West Pond Microneighborhood.

In order for our public spaces (parks, streets, sidewalks, right-of-way, and open-to-the-public areas) to benefit the public good, we believe they must have the following characteristics:

- Trauma-Informed
- ADA Accessible
- Inclusively Welcoming
- Culturally Humble
- Linguistically Equitable
- Intentionally Safe

To that end, we propose the following interventions and/or sustainable solutions for the public spaces located in the West Pond Microneighborhood.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR COMPLETE STREETS

Public Streets, Sidewalks, and Right-of-Way for the Public Good

The government (City, County, State, and Federal) is charged with the oversight of public infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, and public right-of-way. According to the Syracuse City municipal code, the public right-of-way is “the area(s) adjacent to dedicated streets or areas adjacent to streets mainly used for vehicular traffic.” The boundaries of where the public right-of-way ends and private property begins vary from block to block. Wherever it exists, the government overseer has the right, and we believe responsibility, to activate that space, the streets, and sidewalks for the public good.

While every block of this microneighborhood and the Northside at large needs some level of intervention, we have ten specific interventions we propose as priorities in or related to our focus geography.

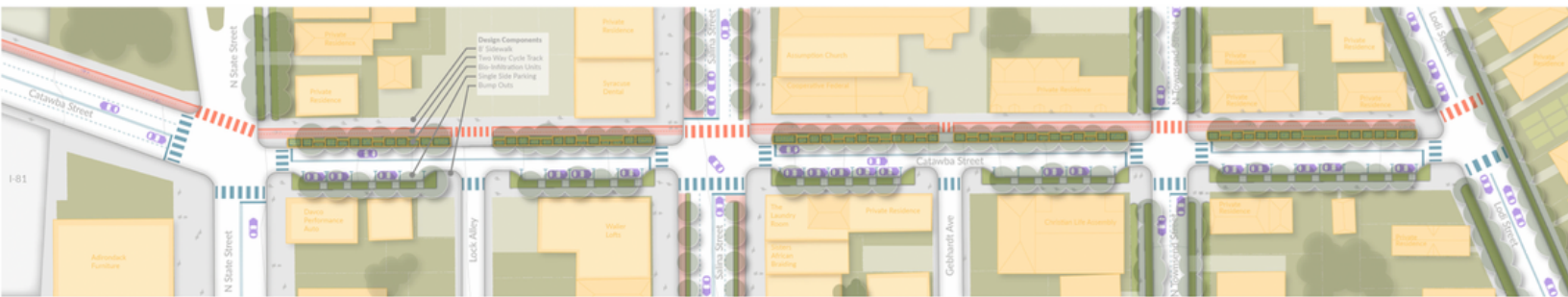


Figure 2.1 Catawba Street Redesign Sketch Ashley Crespo, SUNY ESF, Dept of Landscape Architecture



CATAWBA STREET COMPLETE STREET CONNECTOR

Funded by federal infrastructure dollars, New York State Department of Transportation (NYDOT) is transforming the to-be-former I-81 corridor. Just south of our microneighborhood, they will be bringing the highway to street level and activating the community grid. The portion near to the West Pond Microneighborhood will be undergoing other transformations including (a) the removal of the entrance/exit ramp at Spencer/Catawba and (b) the rebuilding of the Spencer/Catawba Street bridge. The new bridge will feature 10-foot shared use paths on either side across it, connected to a shared use path running along Genant on the west side of the highways, and into the planned Inner Harbor redevelopment. As included in the City of Syracuse Vision Plan (released March 2024), we propose the continuation of the shared use path from the bridge to the intended Lodi Street dedicated bike lanes.



Figure 2.2 Lodi Street Redesign Sketch, Brett Moore, SUNY ESF, Dept of Landscape Architecture

2

LODI STREET DEDICATED BIKE LANES

The City of Syracuse has in its cycling infrastructure plans the continuation of dedicated bike lanes down Lodi Street, connecting from the Empire State Trail on Erie Blvd. We are excited to see these improvements brought up into our microneighborhood, and propose that opportunities to accelerate their installation, ADA sidewalks, and corresponding street calming measures, be explored and accessed to the greatest extent possible.



Figure 2.3 Pond Street Redesign Sketch, Elise Robinson, SUNY ESF, Dept of Landscape Architecture

3

WEST POND STREET STREET CALMING TRANSFORMATION

As the artery that runs through much of our neighborhood of focus, the western portion of Pond Street (between Lodi and Park) is actively utilized by local residents to walk, bike, scooter, ride share, and drive through our community. Due to the essentially non-existent infrastructure, this is a dangerous venture for all transiting along the corridor, and complete streets transformation is needed.

4

NORTH STATE STREET ECHO INVESTMENT ON WEST SIDE OF I-81

As noted previously, New York State Department of Transportation (NYDOT) are staging up to rebuild the I-81 corridor running through the heart of the City of Syracuse, including the installation of a shared use path on the west side of I-81, adjacent to Franklin Square. We propose that equity considerations are made to do a similar street re-design on the eastern side along N State Street.

5

SALINA | LODI | KIRKPATRICK

5-WAY INTERSECTION INTERVENTION



Figure 2.4 5-Way Intersection Intervention, Bryan Sak

The 5-Way Intersection where N Salina, Lodi and Kirkpatrick converge breaks most of the rules of safe transit and Vision Zero best practices. As Centro plans to place a Bus Rapid Transit stop at this intersection, and it is 2/3 surrounded by two public parks, we believe it is imperative to intervene to implement street calming measures. We propose either (a) a full-intersection speed hump, visually standout shared-use (bike, scooter and pedestrian) crosswalks, and other re-design as deemed appropriate by experts, or (b) a state-of-the-art, pedestrian and micro-mobility friendly roundabout.

6

PARK STREET

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



Figure 2.5 Safe Routes to Franklin Elementary School Design Sketch, Bryan Sak

We propose that this major route to Franklin Elementary School, Park Street, be made to be a genuinely safe route to school, including interventions noted above.

7

PARKING CONSIDERATION NARROW 2-WAY STREETS

With a neighborhood built in the days of the horse and buggy, many of our streets are very narrow to accommodate 2-way vehicular traffic. This challenge is exacerbated by the alternating parking that is pervasive throughout the microneighborhood. We propose that the City's powers-that-be consider the following options for these narrow streets: (a) Specify one side for parking with weekly cleaning days or (b) regularly enforce parking laws as delineated so that the streets do not stay impassable for hours.

8

ACCESS RESOURCE HUBS IMPROVED ACCESS TO RTC, REGIONAL MARKET, THE AIRPORT AND JOB HUBS

On a map, our microneighborhood has excellent access to the Regional Market and the Regional Transportation Center (RTC), where connections are now available to the airport and some job hubs. However, the walkability and the micromobility device access to these spaces is very poor. We propose addressing this.



Figure 2.6 RTC and the Northside, Bryan Sak

9

MUNICIPAL LITTER REMOVAL INSTALLATION OF DPW-MANAGED CANS + OVERHAUL OF COLLECTION PRACTICES

If there is one pervasive complaint across our microneighborhood and the majority of the Northside, it is litter. While we understand this is a multi-faceted, complex issue to address, we believe there to be two key interventions possible by the Department of Public Works to assist in overcoming this challenge. The first, is the installation of City-managed garbage cans on every block (alternating sides) on all business or mixed-use corridors throughout the neighborhood. The second is the implementation of a post-garbage truck collection followup team on foot to ensure missed recycling items and other litter do not fill the streets.

10

INFORMATION EQUITY SIDEWALKS AND SNOW REMOVAL

While we are thrilled with the City's intent to address walkability due to deteriorating sidewalks and snow removal, we propose that clear, linguistically-accessible communication of the expectations and implementation of the Comprehensive Sidewalk and Snow Removal Programs be actively carried out.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT

Private Companies for Public Use

We are grateful for the efforts that two of our local, private transit companies have made in recent years to engage with the community to improve service. However, as our municipality chooses to outsource public transportation to private companies, we would like to see the following implemented for the public good.

PUBLIC BUS SYSTEM

powered by



- Activate Bus Rapid Transit System
- Approve and implement the proposed On Demand System
- Install Bus Stop Shelters in Microneighborhood, including: (1) Salina/Kirkpatrick, (2) Salina/E Division, (3) Park/Pond, and as many other in-neighborhood bus stops as plausible
- Install live update screens at all bus stop shelters, and clear signage at all remaining bus stops with a clear listing of bus service, frequency, and a QR code to link to the bus schedule
- Add Apple Pay, mobile pay, and/or other easy pay options for bus fares
- Renew the option of passes for monthly and visitors
- Continuation and improvement of public transportation access to the Syracuse Hancock International Airport to improve viability as an option for travelers
- Additional bus lines to job centers

MICRO-MOBILITY DEVICES

powered by



- New VEO Hub at Pond/N Alvord
- New VEO Hub at N Salina/Kirkpatrick (edge of Union Park)
- New VEO Hub at Pond/1st North (near Centro bus shelter and TOPS grocery store)
- New VEO Hub at Lodi/E Division (edge of Amos Park)
- Repopulate hub at N Salina/E Division
- Clear instructions for use, including equity accessibility options printed and posted in a semi-permanent fashion at each of the hubs, preferably in at least five of the major neighborhood languages
- Place instruction stickers on the micro-mobility device themselves regarding parking rules, and how neighbors can move or request/movement of a device in a timely manner
- Warn riders of stand up scooters not being able to be parked on the Northside before they start a ride on one.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR OUR PUBLIC PARKS



Figure 2.7 DeMong Park Proposed Redesign, Bryan Sak

Demong Park - Community Event Space

As this proposal has been being co-created in our community, we have actively been working with the City of Syracuse's Parks, Recreation & Youth Programs regarding proposed interventions and sustainable solutions for Demong Park. Due to this collaboration, in 2024, a covered community stage is slated to be installed for the public. In addition to these improvements, we propose addressing the defunct staircase at lower Demong Park (section between Lodi and N Salina), in partnership with local artists to foster safe passage while simultaneously installing public art that celebrates local culture.



Figure 2.8 DeMong Park Proposed Redesign, Bryan Sak

Union Park - For All Families

Our collaborative efforts have also included advocacy and community engagement around Union Park, directly across the street from Demong. Thanks to the championing of others in the neighborhood a decade ago, Union Park is already home to a child-friendly playground and splash pad that is actively used in the summer months. As an outgrowth of our more recent engagement, the Parks, Recreation & Youth Programs is slated to install a new two-bay swingset and three shade structures for parents and others accompanying youth to the park. In addition to these improvements, we propose fencing around the park with an unlocked gate to make this park off a busy road safe for young children and those with special needs/unique abilities. Furthermore, we propose intentional activation of the flat grassy space at Union Park, including a managed public restroom with child safety standards, and a half-field soccer space appropriate for young soccer players and general ball play.



Figure 2.9 Amos Park Proposed Redesign, Brett Moore

Amos Park - the Lodi Triangle Pedestrian Plaza

The third and smallest public green space in the microneighborhood is known as Amos Park. This triangular, fenced green space/traffic island located at 1100-1113 N McBride is semi-permanently locked, and unavailable to the local community. We propose the intentional activation of this public park to the Lodi Triangle and the expansion of its boundaries to include the half block of McBride adjacent to a pedestrian plaza. Amos Park is surrounded by numerous cafes and markets offering to-go snacks and meals, with limited to no seating space. Inspired by the work done in many urban neighborhoods such as New York City's Times Square, Bryant Park, and more locally Hanover Square, we believe the impact of such an accessible social, public space to have transformative opportunity.

Additional Amenities in Proximity

The Northside is home to a number of other parks managed by Syracuse's Parks, Recreation & Youth Programs Department, which offer additional access to other amenities needed by local community members. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Washington Square Park (0.5 mi): Basketball Courts, Multi-Purpose Fields, Playground, Splashpad, and Pavillion
- McChesney Park (0.6 mi): Outdoor Fitness Stations, Softball Diamonds, Tennis Courts, Basketball Courts, and Playground
- Schiller Park (1 mi): Full Soccer Fields, Tennis Courts, Walking Trail, and Public Pool

Request for Additional Youth Programs

In addition to the above additions to public parks' infrastructure and land use, we propose that the City of Syracuse's Parks, Recreation & Youth Programs actively explore activating the Demong and/or Union Parks with summertime, weekend, and afterschool youth programming during weather-permitting months. Significant numbers of local residents have expressed the need for additional options for youth to safely gather and recreate, and this mandate falls under the purview of the City of Syracuse's Parks, Recreation & Youth Programs yet there are no known opportunities in these local neighborhood parks.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR OPEN-TO-THE- PUBLIC SPACES

COMMUNITY GARDENS



Within our microneighborhood, we have a handful of community gardens including ones managed by the local charitable organization RISE, and the Haven Community Garden. As fresh food access and safe outdoor spaces are in high demand in our community, we propose the further activation of these spaces for the public good through more expansive networking to gardeners, nutrition and cooking workshops, education around growing in the local climate, harvest distribution, and other community-driven activities. Additionally, we propose community-based education around soil quality for food production for at-home gardens.



For a neighborhood so rich in culture, there is little to no sign of this wealth at a public level. We believe that addressing this will instigate a stronger feel of 'home' for newcomers, provide a co-learning opportunity for us one from another, and bolster a shared sense of identity. To that end, we propose the installation of a Northside Art Trail, which features public art celebrating the cultures of our community by local artists.



COMMUNITY CENTERS

While we do not have any community centers within our microneighborhood, we have two active ones in relative proximity: Armond Magnarelli Community Center (0.6mi) and Northeast Community Center (1.3 mi). Both of these centers offer senior services and youth programs, in addition to offering other community services and resources. We propose strengthening these existing spaces, networking of residents to the resources and opportunities they offer, and ensuring they are truly accessible to all.

PROPOSED EFFORTS AROUND CHAMPIONING

Safety Ambassadors

In addition to the aforementioned government-driven interventions, our efforts around public spaces being maximized for the public good has as a core value improving safety. To that end, we also propose the initiation of a non-police, neighborhood safety collaborative, taking best practices from the celebrated Newark Public Safety Collaborative, in partnership with *Northside Futures* and other partners:

- Democratization of the use of data and analytics
- Empowerment of community organizations to become co-producers of public safety
- Mobilize community resources and expertise to problem-solve our most pressing crime issues

Coalition Advocacy

In our work with City Thread around the Accelerated Mobility Plan, it was repeatedly reiterated that a multi-disciplinary coalition is crucial to advocate for these each of the elements of this proposal, most especially this aspect that is regarding public land managed by the government. To that end, we propose the adoption of the Go Campaign model here in Syracuse (Go 'Cuse) by a multi-disciplinary coalition to carry out local community-based education, citywide advocacy campaigns, and lead the charge in ensuring these resident- and best practice-driven proposals come to be. We seek to partner with existing advocacy groups like Moving People, Uplift Syracuse, and Syracuse Urbanism Club, as well as neighborhood groups meaningfully connected to the local need, in this effort.

affordability

RIGHT-

proximity

SIZED

physical space

HOUSING

quality

Defining Right-Sized Housing

Housing is more than a structure or a unit of infrastructure. It is the place where we sleep, hunker down when we are sick, raise families, and build our lives. Insecure housing is one of the greatest health and well-being risks one can face. Yet a secure home is one of the most impactful positive social determinants of health for a household.

While there are many ways to speak about housing, we are using 'right-sized' in this proposal, which we utilize to speak to (a) affordability, (b) physical space, (c) proximity, (d) quality, and (e) safety. Each of these aspects looks different for various household makeups.



Focus Residents

The following proposal elements are focused on our neighbors, with a keen interest in development not coinciding with displacement. While the nature of communities means there will be others who also come to live in our community, our first priority is our current residents, and our secondary priority is resettling refugees who have long been moving into the neighborhood due to its proximity to resources regularly accessed.

Current and Growing Housing Crisis

According to the 2020 Census, 15-25% of the housing stock in the neighborhood is vacant, most of it unlivable without significant renovations. Upwards of 65% of the homes in 13208 are renter-occupied, and just less than half of residents live below the poverty line. Between 2021 and 2023, the median rent rose by \$240/month, as compared to \$40 in Albany and \$71 in Buffalo. This has led to homelessness increasing by 30%, and family homelessness by 41%; 75% of these people have never been homeless before. There is a tremendous need for affordable housing, defined as a rent payment that does not exceed 1/3 of a tenant's income.

A similar price increase has hit the housing market for potential homebuyers, up 21% in the City of Syracuse. This coupled with the nationwide construction cost increases of 12-22% since 2020, purchasing disinvested properties and renovating them is harder to access.



Other Pressing Concerns

Even prior to the last three years of plummeting into a housing crisis for the Syracuse area, we had a myriad of urgent housing issues in our neighborhood, including:

- Lack of affordable housing for single adults to live independently
- Lack of 3+ bedroom rental units for large or multi-generational families
- Lead poisoning risks in the majority of neighborhood housing stock
- Irresponsible to predatory landlords
- Crumbling retaining walls and inter-property infrastructure
- Deteriorating housing stock due to age and other factors

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

EMERGENCY SHORT-TERM HOUSING



Emergency Housing Response

A disproportionate amount of traumatic displacement happens currently in the Northside, and there are little to no housing options when current housing is no longer tenable, especially for women and families. Most local shelters are beyond capacity, or do not have the accommodations for this growing group of unhoused families. This has led to increasing numbers of families living in economy hotels for months following house fires, units being deemed unfit, and otherwise. Still others are ending up sleeping in cars and on the street.



Short-Term Transitional Housing

In order to hold landlords to account for allowing houses to fall into disrepair, and to have safe, viable emergency housing, we propose to build out and implement a trauma-informed system for relocation/emergency housing for displaced residents who are not eligible or otherwise able to access existing shelters, including:

- Easy-access network for housing counselors and other front-line professionals to housing-related services (e.g., codes enforcement)
- Clear process for immediate reporting and response by non-police trained responders
- Renovation and/or construction of transitional housing options (e.g., Single Room Occupancy homes, Tiny Homes of vacant lots, etc)
- Access to wraparound services to augment housing needs for displaced families (e.g., employment, mental health, nutritious food, etc)



Rapid Rehousing into Long-Term, Right-Sized Housing

In an effort to both raise up and keep more excellent landlords in the business, as well as equip tenants to be highly recommended, we propose the facilitation of housing workshops linked to a preferred housing certification process. Those who are in the transitional short-term housing, or in an untenable typical rental situation, could participate in this series of workshops that (a) equip them with the knowledge and skills about their rights and responsibilities, and (b) provide an opportunity for housing counselors to witness their property care in order to provide strong recommendations.

Simultaneously, we propose cultivating a list of landlords where trauma-informed, cultural-competency and other applicable trainings are likewise offered, and where certified landlords can be matched with those who have completed the preferred housing certification process.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

RIGHT-SIZED, LONG-TERM RENTALS

Equipped and Vetted Landlords

As noted in the previous sections, with such a tremendous percentage of our microneighborhood being rental properties, landlords are key. Very sadly, our landlords and property managers are some of the greatest issues our neighborhoods face. So as noted above, we propose cultivating a list of landlords where trauma-informed, cultural-competency and other applicable trainings are likewise offered, and where they can be matched with those who have completed the preferred housing certification process, in partnership with NEHDA and other partners.

For aspiring landlords who are new to the business, we propose providing additional assistance in the form of subsidies, operational support and mentorship for them to rehabilitate and re-activate vacant and delinquent housing stock in the community that would otherwise be untenable due to the expense incurred.



Resident-Minded Property Management Company

A significant step in the right direction was a law passed by Syracuse government to require out of town landlords to have a local property manager. However, many local property management companies have property loads they cannot manage well, are disinterested in a level of excellence, and/or are severely lacking in both trauma- and cultural-competencies. We propose the initiation of a trauma-informed, culturally-humble, excellent property management company, in partnership with Northside Futures, North Side Learning Center and other partners.

Access to Quality Housing in Proximate Neighborhoods

We also believe that a sense of agency and access is important, so for those residents who wish to stay close to Northside friends and resources ought to have affordable options in adjacent microneighborhoods and developments, such as Penfield, Franklin Square, Lakefront/Inner Harbor, and Maria Regina for the aging.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE
SOLUTION MORE

OWNER
OCCUPANTS



PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

ADDRESSING
SYSTEMS

Moving Renters to Home Ownership

One of the most crucial ways to protect residents against displacement as development comes is ownership. As rental rates soar, and are expected to continue increasing, more and more tenants will not be able to afford their homes. We propose to move as many current residents who are current renters into a home ownership situation through:

- Increasing numbers of grants for closing costs and down payments
- Facilitation of Section 8 Housing Choice into ownership option

Alleviating Some of the Home Repair Burden

One of the greatest challenges of homeowners is the cost of home repair, especially for older homes that were not thoroughly renovated. However, our community benefits when these home owners are able to improve their properties. We propose further facilitation of access to resources for housing repairs by owner occupants.

Retaining Walls as Municipal Infrastructure

The majority of the Northside is built on a hill, with the structures having been constructed in very close proximity. The original constructors of the neighborhood utilized retaining walls throughout the area to make this layered structure building possible; these walls are now crumbling. With the incredible expense to repair them individually, and the interconnected nature of them requiring access to multiple properties, we propose that retaining walls ought to be viewed like sidewalks in that the local municipality ought to treat them as an infrastructure issue.

Lead Remediation Resources with Less Bureaucracy

Lead poisoning is a tremendous issue across our community, especially prevalent on the Northside with the age of our housing stock. While the City and County have lead remediation programs that fully cover the costs for eligible households with a child under six years old, the majority do not access the program unless if there is a test of elevated levels of lead in the blood of a child. We propose that the bureaucracy and paperwork be simplified to more easily facilitate interventions being enacted in rental properties. We also propose that those who are eligible for the interventions to be done be expanded to include additional income-eligible housing.

Codes Enforcement with Teeth

While there are a number of laws in place regarding housing that are supposed to be enforced by City of Syracuse Codes Enforcement, there is an ongoing challenge in having codes made aware of issues, as well as the “teeth” in the system. We propose the running of a community-based education campaign around See-Click-Fix app/CityLine and the nature of Codes Enforcement. We also propose an exploration of how to instigate a more robust, graduated-level enforcement that both pressures and equips property owners to respond and improve.

A background network diagram consisting of numerous nodes (dots) connected by thin lines, forming a complex web. The nodes are in shades of grey and white, and the lines are thin and light grey. The overall style is modern and technical.

BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
AS
RESOURCE
ACCESS

DAY-TO-DAY RESOURCES



Healthy Food Options



Cultural Food Ingredients



Social Gathering Spaces



Household Items



Baby Items



Children's Clothing



School Supplies



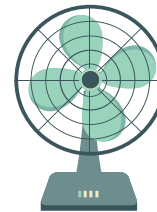
Beauty and Barber Services



Adult Clothing



Car Maintenance



Small Appliances



Faith Communities



Technology



Kitchen and Diningwares

Updated, Online Business Directory

Throughout this community engagement and planning process, we have been working with partners to build out a directory of Northside businesses, including the items and services that they each offer. We propose taking this information to populate an online business directory, that is managed and kept up to date by the leadership of the Northside Business Partnership.

Local Hiring

Beyond their key role in meeting local resource access needs, one of the key opportunities with local businesses are local jobs. We propose that the updated, online business directory add a component which keeps an updated list of in-neighborhood employment opportunities, and that local entities are equipped to assist with applications and supporting the hiring process.

Entrepreneur and Business Coaching

Many aspiring and existing business owners have dreams to launch and/or grow their businesses within our community, but are in need of capacity building and learning opportunities to do so. We propose strengthening a trauma- and culturally-informed business coaching ecosystem in partnership with NEHDA, SBDC, Centerstate CEO UpStart! and others.

BUILDING A STRONGER, MORE EQUITABLE LOCAL ECONOMY

A Need for Proximity

We all have a set of items and services we need to live our day-to-day lives. In our current day, there is a significant shift nationwide of people wanting to live, work, play, and access needed resources in the same community, not requiring the use of a personal car. In our neighborhood, the majority of residents rely on walking, micromobility devices, and/or public transportation for transit already, and need the ability to live, work, play, and access needed resources by these means. Many residents of our microneighborhood have expressed the challenge of accessing the items and services they need locally and affordably.

Business Types to Address Resource Access Needs

Beyond an individual or household's ability to cultivate food or otherwise make/access their own resources and services needed, one relies on businesses and/or the government to meet their resource access needs. The government in our local areas predominately outsources resource access and service needs, where applicable, to local businesses as well. The business types that provide resource access include:

- Not-for-Profit Organizations
- For-Profit Businesses
- Social Enterprises

The Value of Hyper-Local Economy

Each of these types of businesses that are a part of our hyper-local economy have the opportunity to transform both the resource access concerns and overall economic conditions. We propose working with existing and new businesses of all kinds to carry out the following in accordance with strengthening the hyper-local economy in an equitable approach:

- Stop the bleed of local dollars, both earned wages and government subsidies, which are leaving the community to slumlords, irresponsible business owners, and other means
- Foster genuine accessibility for all local residents, with intentional efforts around language access, cultural competency, and ADA adherence
- Facilitate ownership of the land and enterprises by residents by all means possible, including workers cooperatives and land trusts
- Foster local job opportunities by encouraging local hiring
- Promote local investment opportunities with wealth-building access for current residents
- Build local financial literacy to understand basics of the economy and their power in it



We propose that these activities be enacted along all in-neighborhood business corridors, including Pond, Park, Union, Lodi, Townsend, N Salina, Kirkpatrick, and E Division.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR RESOURCE ACCESS

1

Social Arm for For-Profit Businesses

Facilitating for-profit businesses looking to take on equitable access opportunities

2

Back-End Office Support

Make operational support available affordably in-neighborhood for local business owners

3

Transition For-Profit Businesses into Social Enterprises

Encourage for-profit businesses in neighborhoods to have a profitable yet social approach

4

Meaningful Networking of Residents to Existing Charitable Services

Network residents to existing charitable services through information equity

5

Social Enterprise Business Incubator

Incubating aspiring entrepreneurs in starting 501c3 or 501c4 businesses

6

In-Neighborhood Co-Working Space

Providing a co-working space to new businesses and solo entrepreneurs to provide in-neighborhood meeting space and access for local, potential customers

7

Weekly Pop-Up Night Market

An in-neighborhood pop-up weekly to bring resources otherwise not available in proximity



Equitable Access to Out-of-Neighborhood Resources

Even with all of these interventions, we recognize that certain resources are unlikely to become available within our neighborhood or walking distance, so we propose assurance of public transportation access to these key resources:

- Certain Specialized Health Services
- Job Centers
- City, County, State, and Federal Offices
- Regional Transportation Center
- Syracuse International Airport

STEWARDSHIP

The Vision Council

This proposal was co-created by residents and stakeholders of the West Pond Microneighborhood, and inspired the creation of a dedicated entity to bringing partners together to implement it. This entity, West Pond Alliance, will be led by the Vision Council who will steward its implementation in an equitable, resident-led approach.

The West Pond Alliance is a member alliance of the Hopeprint Association, a 501(c)3 organization, dedicated to facilitating sustainable development that all may prosper in place. The Alliance will have a limited number of staff and projects that it directly leads, but will predominately convene Partners and Affiliates in collaborative efforts to bring this proposal to life.

PARTNERS

Individuals or entities committed to equitably reinvest in the West Pond microneighborhood, in collaboration with the Alliance as a whole, aligned with this proposal and the best interest of residents at heart (requires application approval).

AFFILIATES

Businesses or organizations that share a common interest of equitable reinvestment in the West Pond microneighborhood, and in collaborating towards implementation of this proposal.



ALLIANCE RESOURCES

Member Alliance Resources

As a Member Alliance of the Hopeprint Association, the West Pond Alliance operates officially under the 501(c)3 umbrella of Hopeprint, Inc, and receives the following from the Association:

- Operational Support
- Capacity Building
- Networking and Resource Matchmaking

Alliance Partner Resources

Those who apply, are invited and accept to be a Partner of the West Pond Alliance will have the following investments made to themselves and their concepts:

- Operational Supports for grants and funding on Alliance-related projects
- Access to Capacity Building resources available to the Alliance collectively
- Priority access to funding for collaborative projects

Other Alliance Resources

Both Affiliates and Partners of the West Pond Alliance will benefit from other Alliance Resources which are slated to include:

- Advocacy Campaigns
- Co-Learning Circles
- Symposia
- Strategic Fund Opportunities