

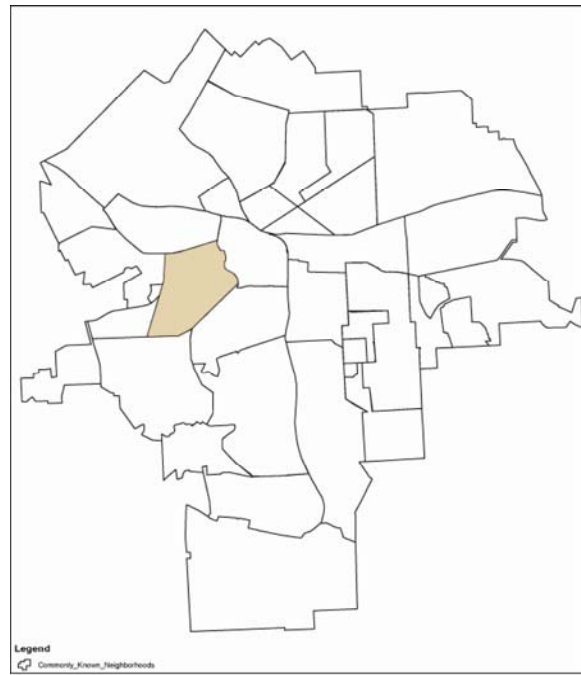
Near Westside Neighborhood Profile

Boundaries

The Near Westside neighborhood is bounded by the elevated rail line on the north; Onondaga Creek on the east; West Onondaga Street on the south; and South Geddes Street on the west.

Primary Characteristics

The Near Westside is a primarily residential area with some of the oldest housing stock in the City. There are many vacant homes and homes in need of substantial rehabilitation. Many of the residents of the Near Westside live below the poverty line and struggle to support themselves and their families. The neighborhood has a large Latino population, and many residents speak English as a second language or not at all.



Near Westside Demographics							
Population	Households	Average Household Size	Families	Family Size	Median Household Income	Unemployment	
						Male	Female
7,030	2,424	2.9	1,511	3.5	\$14,474	14.3%	9.1%

Housing Description

There is a mix of one- and two-family homes, many in disrepair. There is a very high vacancy rate and the majority of homes are renter-occupied. The Syracuse Housing Authority James Geddes development resides on several blocks with a total of 39 row houses.

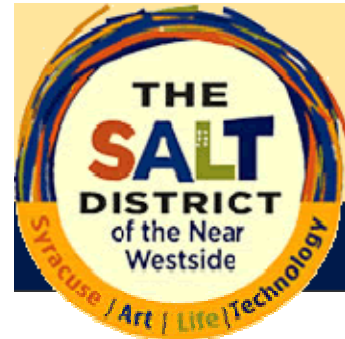
The introduction of a variety of initiatives has brought great attention as well as esteem to this historically blighted section of the city. This is necessary considering persistent quality of life issues and negative stereotypes of the neighborhood and its residents, which have deteriorated the morale of residents and repelled potential investors. Still, the various merits of the area have finally been sufficiently promoted to stimulate the reversal of the trend toward decay in the Near Westside.

Near Westside Housing Data								
Housing Stock		Tenure			Occupancy Status			
Median Age	Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Owner/Renter Ratio		Occupied	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
1943	3,059	509	1,917	16.7%	62.7%	2,427	632	20.7%

Economic Development

Most business activity is located along the corridors that flank the neighborhood. West Onondaga is home to several nonprofit organizations and businesses such as a drug store, convenience store, and a spa. On West Street, Nojaims supermarket, one of a few in the City, anchors the neighborhood. King & King Architects relocated its offices from the suburbs to a new facility on West Street. The location of this development has the potential to bridge the divide between the Near Westside and Armory Square. WCNY has announced its intentions to relocate its broadcast facilities to this area as well, although the recent economic recession has put these plans on hold.

The Geddes Street corridor is a more typical inner-city business district, featuring convenience stores, gas stations, liquor stores, used car lots, a dollar store, and a Save-A-Lot grocery store. At the northern portion of the neighborhood, however, the intersection of Geddes and Fayette Streets is home to the Lipe Art Park, the Gear Factory (which houses artists' studios), and the CASE Supply building. West Fayette Street is also home to several long-standing businesses and the Delavan Art Gallery.



The Near Westside Initiative, being led by Syracuse University, aims to revitalize the neighborhood and promote it as a center of arts and technology. The project rebrands the neighborhood as the SALT District of the Near Westside, with SALT being an acronym for "Syracuse Art Life Technology." The initiative is redeveloping the vacant Case Warehouse and Lincoln Supply Warehouse into live-work units for artists.

Schools

Seymour Magnet School (K-5) is in Year 2 of "Restructuring," according to the 2008-09 New York State Report Card for the Syracuse City School District. Blodgett School (K-8) is in Year 2 of "In Need of Improvement" and is scheduled to be renovated or replaced in coming years. Students go on to Fowler High School, which is on the State's list of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools.



Greenspace & Recreation

Skiddy Park, located across from Blodgett School, is home to a playground, basketball courts, and a large playing field. The park is used by residents, students, and neighborhood organizations.

Housing Development Strategies

- Vacant Structures – Identify and stabilize vacant structures, and use strategic demolition/deconstruction, rehabilitation, and land banking to reduce blight and improve the quality of the neighborhood. Re-subdivision may be used to contain orphaned lots.
- Private Development – Syracuse University's Near Westside Initiative is a good example of private investment in revitalizing neighborhoods.
- Promote Homeownership – Down-payment and closing costs assistance and the \$1 home purchase program will encourage owner-occupancy.

- Rental Properties – The Near Westside has a high rate of renter-occupancy. The City should work with landlords and tenants alike to encourage proper maintenance; code enforcement and rental registry can assist with this.
- Deter Crime – The Near Westside has a high crime rate and is plagued with gangs, drugs, and violent crime. The police should seek a better relationship with residents and focus on drug and gang enforcement.

Promotional Strategies

- Population Specific Marketing – The City and the Near Westside Initiative have been marketing the neighborhood to urban homesteaders and artists who are seeking a life-work environment.
- Market Existing Programs – Continue to promote the \$1 home purchase program and other existing incentives.

Success Indicators

- Coordinated block housing development strategy
- Completion of existing stock rehabilitation
- Increased home improvement
- Increased homeownership