

Park Avenue Neighborhood Profile

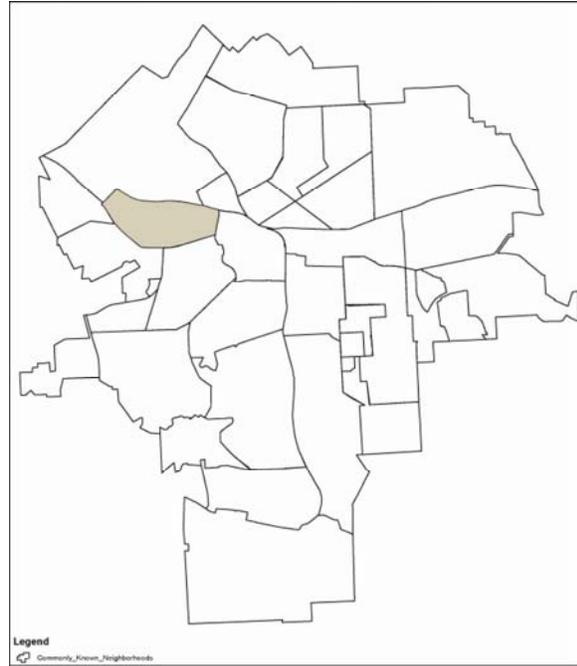
Boundaries

The Park Avenue neighborhood is bounded by Route 690 on the north; West Street on the east; Erie Boulevard West on the south; and Hiawatha Boulevard on the west.

Primary Characteristics

The Park Avenue neighborhood is a mix of lower-to-middle income residential properties with large commercial corridors running through it, including North Geddes Street and West Genesee Street.

This neighborhood, which is home to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, has traditionally been home to many Polish and Ukrainian immigrants, although in recent decades it has attracted residents of Latino descent. Many residents of the Park Ave. neighborhood live below the poverty line, and unemployment is high. The housing stock is aging and subject to severe deterioration.



CITY OF SYRACUSE
Park Ave Neighborhood

| Park Ave. Demographics | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|------------------------|----------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------|
| Population | Households | Average Household Size | Families | Average Family Size | Median Household Income | Unemployment | |
| | | | | | | Male | Female |
| 2,822 | 1,214 | 2.3 | 614 | 3.2 | \$20,978 | 9.0% | 4.1% |

Housing Description

This neighborhood has a mix of one- and two-family homes and several larger multi-unit buildings and most of the homes are renter occupied. The rate of vacancy is extremely high and growing. While many of the homes in the neighborhood have historic significance, a large number of structures require substantial rehabilitation or demolition. In particular, the row of Victorian houses on Park Avenue known as the “Five Sisters” has been the focus of local revitalization efforts.

The Sackett Tract/Sacred Heart Community Initiative is focused on the northwest corner of the neighborhood, in the traditional Maciejowa area.



| Park Ave. Housing Data | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------|------------------|--------|--------------|
| Housing Stock | | Tenure | | | | Occupancy Status | | |
| Median Age | Housing Units | Owner Occupied | Renter Occupied | Owner/Renter Ratio | | Occupied | Vacant | Vacancy Rate |
| 1940 | 1,604 | 381 | 857 | 23.8% | 53.4% | 1,238 | 366 | 22.8% |

Economic Development

North Geddes Street and West Genesee Street are large commercial corridors. Businesses include gas stations, taverns, fast-food restaurants, funeral homes, laundromats, and a bakery. This section of West Genesee Street is known as “Historic Automobile Row” and is home to over 20 auto dealerships. The encroachment of Automobile Row upon the surrounding residential areas is a top concern of local residents.

Schools

Frazer School (K-8) is in “Year 1 of Restructuring” according to the 2008-09 New York State Report Card for the Syracuse City School District. Students go on to attend Fowler High School.



Greenspace & Recreation

Frazer School has playing fields, a playground, and a swimming pool. Pulaski & Kosciusko Park is a small triangular urban-style park in front of the Basilica, at the intersection of West Genesee Street and Park Avenue. Much of Park Avenue has a grassy median with mature trees, plants, and

flowers. This median connects with Leavenworth Park, which has trees and open space and has recently been home to summer festivals and other activities.

Housing Development Strategies

- Vacant Property Stabilization – The City should address the vacancy problem through strategic demolition/deconstruction and land banking.
- One House on the Block – Code enforcement and rehabilitation assistance can be used to prevent a few abandoned or neglected properties from bringing down the value of the entire neighborhood.
- Substantial Rehabilitation Owner Assistance Program – The Sacred Heart/Sackett Tract Community Initiative offers home improvement loans and mini-grants to neighborhood residents.
- Rental Properties – The neighborhood has a very high rate of renter-occupancy, and many rental properties are in poor condition. 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 Geddes Street corridor in particular has a high level of property and violent crime, and drugs and gangs are a concern. Increased police presence and a better relationship with the residents could help address this. The neighborhood is a good candidate for a storefront police station.

Promotional Strategies

- Target Specific Populations – Market the neighborhood to urban homesteaders who are willing and able to put “sweat equity” into their homes. The historic nature of the neighborhood could make it attractive to residents and investors alike.
- Sustainability – The neighborhood’s walkability and proximity to Downtown give Park Ave. the potential for future growth.

Success Indicators

- Reduced vacancy rate
- Increased homeownership