

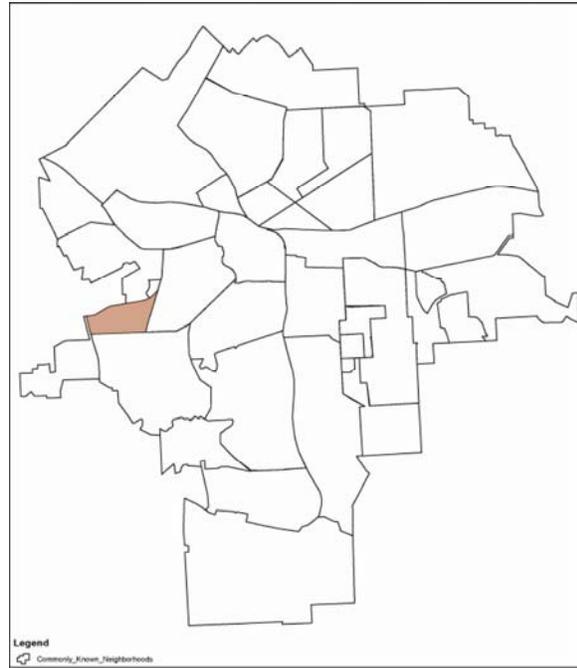
Skunk City Neighborhood Profile

Boundaries

The Skunk City neighborhood is bounded by Grand Avenue on the north, Geddes Street on the east, Bellevue Avenue on the south, and City limits on the West.

Primary Characteristics

Skunk City, a residential neighborhood, is located in the western section of the City and derives its name from the abundance of skunks drawn to the area's flood plain as a source of water. Once a popular neighborhood for working class families due to its location and affordability, the area has lost much of its population over the past few decades, and many of the one- and two-family homes are vacant and in need of repair or demolition.



CITY OF SYRACUSE
Skunk City Neighborhood

Skunk City Demographics							
Population	Households	Average Household Size	Families	Average Family Size	Median Household Income	Unemployment	
						Male	Female
2,065	786	2.6	518	3.3	\$19,702	7.1%	3.1%

Housing Description

Skunk City features a combination of one- and two- family homes and multi-unit apartment buildings. The neighborhood is comprised of small-scale cape and ranch style homes. The vacancy rate has been growing for decades. Syracuse United Neighbors, a citizens' organization, has a strong presence in the neighborhood and advocates for the demolition of vacant structures.

The Skunk City Community Initiative, funded by Onondaga County, offers home improvement loans and mini-grants to neighborhood residents.

Skunk City Housing Data								
Housing Stock		Tenure			Occupancy Status			
Median Age	Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Owner/Renter Ratio		Occupied	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
1940	967	318	471	32.9%	48.7%	789	178	18.4%

Economic Development

Other than a neighborhood pub, the only commercial area is located on the South Geddes Street corridor, with small shops and restaurants. Western Lights plaza, located just west of Skunk City in the Town of Onondaga, is the main shopping center for the area. The plaza features two supermarkets, fast food restaurants, and other retail businesses.

Schools

Delaware Elementary School (K-5) in “In Corrective Action,” according to the New York State Report Card for the Syracuse City School District. Students go on to attend Fowler High School. Both schools are on the State’s list of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools, which is a concern for families in the neighborhood.

Greenspace & Recreation

Burnet Park, an 88-acre community park, lies along the northern border of Skunk City. The park features a 9-hole golf course, a swimming pool, playing fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, a playground, and a picnic area. Onondaga County’s Rosamond Gifford Zoo is adjacent to Burnet Park.

The Harbor Brook Retention Basin, created to control flooding in the area, offers undeveloped greenspace and a baseball field.

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.
- Home Improvement Loan Program – Low-interest loans and mini-grants through the Community Initiative program will encourage homeowners and landlords to maintain and improve their properties.
- Rental Properties – The rate of owner-occupancy has fallen drastically, and the City should work with tenants and landlords to prevent further deterioration. The carrot-and-stick approach of home improvement loans and code enforcement could be effective here.
- Neighborhood Association Engagement – Syracuse United Neighbors is a powerful and active neighborhood group that works to improve the area.

Promotional Strategies

- Market Existing Programs – Promote programs such as the Skunk City Community Initiative Home Improvement Program.

Success Indicators

- Reduced vacant structures
- Increased homeownership
- Established neighborhood association
- Block development activities