

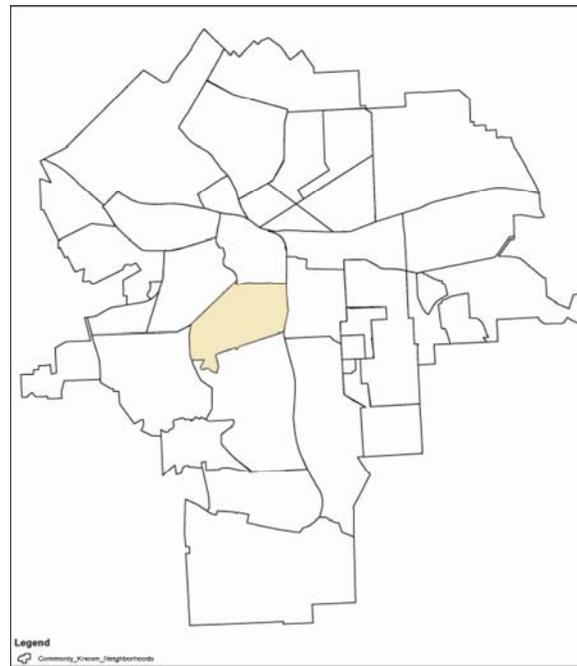
Southwest Neighborhood Profile

Boundaries

The Southwest neighborhood is bounded by West Onondaga Street on the northwest; Adams Street on the north; Route 81 on the east; Castle Street, South Avenue, Onondaga Creek, and Marginal Street on the south; and Onondaga Avenue on the west.

Primary Characteristics

Once home to some of the most elegant and attractive residences in Syracuse, the Southwest neighborhood has experienced significant economic decline over the last half-century. Interstate 81 forms a physical boundary between the Southwest neighborhood and Syracuse University, hampering development, and a large public housing complex and an elevated rail line cut it off from Downtown, further isolating the neighborhood.



Although the Southwest neighborhood is the site of much civic and nonprofit activity, the neighborhood is still in recovery and requires continued investment to prevent further deterioration of its housing stock. There is a high rate of poverty and unemployment is extremely high.

Southwest Demographics							
Population	Households	Average Household Size	Families	Average Family Size	Median Household Income	Unemployment	
						Male	Female
4,893	1,812	2.7	1,151	3.3	\$12,500	14.9%	7.1%

Housing Description

The Southwest neighborhood has a mix of one- and two-family homes, multi-unit apartment buildings, and public housing complexes. There is a low rate of owner occupancy, and many structures are vacant and in need of serious rehabilitation or demolition. Asbestos and lead are serious concerns that further prevent improvement.

There are many structures with historic character. West Onondaga Street is the site of several magnificent mansions dating to the late-19th century, and the 400, 500, and 600 blocks have been identified as a potential National Register District. While these structures were once home to Syracuse's most prominent doctors, lawyers, inventors, and businessmen, neighborhood residents no longer have the resources (or family size) to support these structures as single-family homes. Most of them have been converted into apartments or offices or simply left to deteriorate.

Southwest Housing Data								
Housing Stock		Tenure			Occupancy Status			
Median Age	Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Owner/Renter Ratio		Occupied	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
1950	2,376	385	1,458	16.2%	61.4%	1,843	533	22.4%

Economic Development

The Southwest neighborhood has the South Avenue and Onondaga Street commercial corridors. These corridors are home to industrial, manufacturing, retail, wholesale, and distribution businesses. In addition, small, family-owned businesses are helping to revitalize sections of both business corridors. These businesses include beauty and barber shops, fast-food restaurants, a drug store, a laundromat, taverns, and family restaurants. The Downtown business district borders the Southwest neighborhood on the north.

The Southwest Neighborhood is one of three designated for three million dollars in mitigation funds from Onondaga County to revitalize the area around the new sewer treatment facility at the corner of Midland Avenue and Onondaga Creek. The Midland-Lincoln-Bellevue Project (MLB) is comprised of several initiatives that include: owner-occupant mini-grants, purchase rehabilitation program, and several demolition, rehabilitation and new construction projects. In addition the project involves two economic development initiatives that include upgrades to local business along South Avenue and the purchase of a warehouse that will serve as the future site of a community grocery store.

Schools

Dr. King Magnet School (K-5), located on the northeast edge of the neighborhood, is in “Year 1 of Restructuring,” according to the 2008-09 New York State Report Card for the Syracuse City School District. Students also attend Elmwood School (K-5), which is rated “Year 2 of Restructuring”, and Delaware Elementary School (K-5), which is rated “In Corrective Action.” Students go on to attend Fowler High School.



Greenspace & Recreation

Spirit of Jubilee Park, a 2-acre neighborhood park located on South Avenue, features a baseball field, a tennis court, and a basketball court. Lower

Onondaga Park, a 15-acre community park featuring a baseball field, a playground, and a stream with a fountain, is adjacent to the Southwest neighborhood. The Southwest Community Center plays a significant role in implementing recreational activities and social service programs, and houses an indoor swimming pool and full size basketball court.

The planned expansion of the Creekwalk would follow Onondaga Creek, which runs through the Southwest neighborhood.

Housing Development Strategies

- Rental Properties – Most Southwest residents are renters. Work with tenants and landlords alike to encourage maintenance of rental properties. Code enforcement may assist with this.
- 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.
- Block by Block Development – Targeted block-by-block development in cooperation with agencies such as Jubilee Homes and the Syracuse Model Neighborhood Corporation will reduce blight and improve the quality of the neighborhood.
- Substantial Rehabilitation Owner Assistance Program – Low-interest loans and grants will enable homeowners to maintain and improve their properties.
- Homeownership Promotion -- Reduce the barriers to owner-occupancy with down-payment and closing costs assistance, as well as homeowner counseling for first-time buyers.

Promotional Strategies

- Market Existing Programs – Increase awareness of and access to existing home improvement and homeownership programs.

Success Indicators

- Block housing development
- Increased homeownership
- Increased home improvement activities
- Reduced vacancies
- Vibrant commercial corridor