



# The University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan



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## INTRODUCTION

The University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan describes a shared vision for the future which neighborhood residents, institutions and other stakeholders can work individually and collectively towards achieving. The plan was created through a process that engaged the local knowledge and expertise of a broad spectrum of residents and other stakeholders. The process was guided by an Advisory Committee composed of representatives of neighborhood organizations, the institutions, landlords and the city. The plan seeks to build on the neighborhood's many strengths and assets while addressing concerns and issues that were brought forward during an 18 month process of dialogue and investigation.

Preparation of the Plan has been sponsored by the University Neighborhood Preservation Association (UNPA). UNPA's original intent was to prepare a plan that would guide their strategic actions over the next five to seven years in accomplishing their mission, which includes the promotion of owner occupancy in the area east of the Syracuse University campus. They had the foresight, however, to understand the value of opening the process to broader community participation so that the resulting plan could guide the strategic actions of multiple organizations and city departments. The Plan reinforces and builds on the City of Syracuse Housing Plan (2010).

The planning process was organized into three stages.

The first stage was designed to uncover and understand the neighborhood, primarily through the varied perspectives of those that live, work or own businesses in the neighborhood. Through the interview questions and workshop activities shared values, assets and strengths, issues and concerns, opportunities and resources were documented and confirmed. Through analysis of this data, preliminary goals were developed.

During the second stage possible ways of achieving the neighborhood goals were developed and considered, through alternative action strategies and physical design interventions. The project team expanded to include students in the SUNY ESF Department of Landscape Architecture Community Design and Planning Thematic Studio. The students worked with community members to explore priority issues in greater depth at a second neighborhood forum and prepared design studies which they presented and discussed at a special presentation forum.

In the final stage the project team worked closely with the Advisory Committee to refine the goals and action strategies, to perform more in-depth research and to develop specific recommendations around priority issues. The final draft plan that emerged from this entire process was presented in a final neighborhood forum during which those present had the opportunity to help prioritize action strategies and brainstorm methods to distribute the plan broadly.



## The Plan and Document Organization

The Housing and Neighborhood Plan is composed of a Vision Statement, Goals and Action Strategies, and two diagrams which illustrate application of the Vision to the physical space of the neighborhood.

The Vision Statement is an expression of how the community wants to be able to describe the neighborhood 10 to 15 years in the future.

A series of five goals define the ways that the community intends to achieve the vision. The goal topic areas are those that emerged as most important and relevant to the community. The first two goals focus on housing related issues, and the other three goals address additional characteristics that will continue to make the neighborhood one of choice for a diverse population.

Under each goal are five or more action strategies, which describe programs, plans or policies that can be undertaken and implemented by small groups, organizations and institutions. The ideas for the action strategies emerged from the brainstorming at workshops, follow-up research and discussions within the advisory committee. Some action strategies can be accomplished almost immediately with readily available resources, while others are longer term and will require additional planning, partnerships and funding.

*The Housing and Market Strategy Diagram*, provides recommendations for housing choices and marketing ideas for different areas of the neighborhood. The recommendations come from analysis and synthesis of data on the existing housing stock, opportunities for building reuse, proximity to neighborhood resources, and ownership trends. *The Gateway and Green Infrastructure Diagram* identifies the major entries to the neighborhood where a sense welcome and the neighborhood image should be reinforced and celebrated. It also illustrates the concept of a “green infrastructure” network, strengthening connections between the numerous natural and cultural resources within the neighborhood by utilizing ecological principles and “complete streets” principles while promoting walking, biking and use of public transportation.

While the plan document is concise, it was developed through a rich dialogic process that produced data, analysis and synthesis, presentations and design alternatives that provide valuable insight and understanding of the issues and opportunities that exist in the neighborhood. This information is documented in the three Appendices. Those interested in implementing the Plan should review this information because it will add depth to understanding the goals and implementation of the action strategies.

## University/Westcott Neighborhood Vision Statement

*The University/Westcott Neighborhood offers a range of housing options and amenities to accommodate a diversity of residents at all life stages. Our neighborhood values a sense of community that is strengthened by respectful communication, cooperative decision making and civic engagement. We uphold a long tradition of home ownership and seek to expand such opportunities, and provide a balance between long and short term residents. Properties are exceptionally well maintained and renovations exhibit respect for the traditional style, character, scale and detail of the housing stock.*

*Our neighborhood is renowned for its outstanding parks and open spaces, the support of walking and bicycling, and reduced reliance on personal cars. The vibrant Westcott Business District is strongly supported by residents and visitors attracted to its unique mix of neighborhood scale retail, restaurants and offices. We are proud of our high quality public schools, the multiple opportunities for lifelong learning, supportive relationships with our college and university neighbors and public artistic expression.*

### **Goal 1 – Housing Options**

Promote a mix of housing options, including traditional and non-traditional home ownership and rental options that encourage and meet the needs of a diversity of residents

#### **Action Strategies**

1. Encourage and promote owner occupancy in the neighborhood striving to increase owner-occupancy on all blocks in the neighborhood in order to decrease the negative physical impacts of high density population on the existing urban fabric
  - a. Continue to document and illustrate data on neighborhood owner occupied and rental housing trends, contemporary demographics and market trends and demands; and monitor land use policy, zoning and special neighborhood district regulations. Utilize this data as the basis for discussions and policy decisions by neighborhood organizations, city agencies and academic institutions.
  - b. The University Neighborhood Preservation Association (UNPA) should continue to utilize its programs (Homeowners Assistance grants, Rehabilitation Loan program, and Rescue a Rental program) to both protect the stability of predominantly owner-occupied blocks and to restore the balance in critical blocks.
  - c. UNPA should develop procedures and incentives to assist groups

### **Goal 1**

Promote a mix of housing options, including traditional and non-traditional home ownership and rental options that encourage and meet the needs of a diversity of residents

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of homeowners who want to work together to ensure owner-occupied homes on their block are sold to owner-occupants, and/or who want to work together to convert rentals into owner-occupied homes.

- d. UNPA should use the data described above in combination with the analysis of housing and neighborhood characteristics (such as proximity to institutions, schools, parks, business districts, circulation routes) to target areas to promote owner occupancy.
- e. Continue to encourage the academic institutions and other Hill employers to promote employee home ownership in the University/Westcott Neighborhood through institutional assistance and services such as marketing and promotions, mortgage assistance, or low interest loans for renovation.
- f. Devise a marketing campaign to encourage residence in the University/Westcott Neighborhood targeted to prospective home buyers through multiple sources including real estate agencies, the academic institutions, and other employers in the University Hill and downtown areas.
- g. Work with property owners who have been denied Certificates of Suitability to market their homes to owner occupants.

2. Develop scenarios that illustrate possible future proportions of owner occupied and rental properties within different areas of the neighborhood to facilitate continued dialogue among the various stakeholders, including the planners and policy makers at University Hill institutions.
3. Explore the redevelopment of significant un- or under-utilized and soon to be vacant neighborhood structures, such as the Babcock Shattuck House, former Levy School, and Bishop Harrison Center, into residential options, especially options that are currently not available in the neighborhood, such as condominiums, senior housing (unassisted living), assisted living, and housing cooperatives.
  - a. Establish a Neighborhood Planning Group (NPG) comprised of stakeholders, including representatives of neighborhood organizations, the City, those with architectural and development expertise, and TNT, to review and comment on residential redevelopment of these significant structures, such as those mentioned below and those to become available in the future.
  - b. The Babcock Shattuck House, also known as the Jewish War Veterans home, located at the East Genesee and Westcott Streets, has been vacant for more than 20 years. A variety of realistic options should be pursued at this time with input and participation by the NPG.
  - c. Levy School, a large, 3-story brick structure located at Fellows Avenue and Harvard Place, is currently being used as swing space during City school renovation projects and is likely to be vacated in the near future. The NPG should enter into discussion with the Syracuse City School District at this time so that appropriate residential development can be initiated immediately when the structure is vacated.
  - d. The Bishop Harrison Center is a large structure on Lancaster Avenue, in the vicinity of Ed Smith School. The NPG should enter into discussion with the Syracuse Diocese at this time to pursue residential redevelopment.

- e. The NPG should meet with owners of other significant structures that are vacant or underutilized or become available, such as the Gustav Stickley House, regarding plans for reuse or potential residential development.
- f. There are likely other structures in the neighborhood that are suitable for conversion into condominiums or cooperatives. The NPG should collaborate with the academic institution's architecture, landscape architecture and planning departments, developer representatives, and with the city planning and zoning departments to determine criteria for possible conversion using case study research, identifying potential sites and possibly providing incentives for conversions that revitalize important structures within targeted areas.

4. Encourage and promote owner occupancy of two- and three-family homes in the neighborhood to provide high quality rental properties through direct oversight by the property owners.

- a. Provide financial incentives such as low interest home improvement loans to owner-occupants of multiple unit houses.
- b. Create neighborhood networking opportunities to match multiple-unit owner occupants with prospective tenants.
- c. Assist multiple unit owner occupants to develop the education and tools to screen tenants and develop plain language leases.

5. Encourage the continued availability of high quality and well maintained rental housing for individuals, families and others at a range of income levels that is distributed throughout the neighborhood rather than concentrated in certain areas.

- a. Continue to encourage the City of Syracuse to take action to enforce the existing Certificate of Suitability ordinance.
- b. Encourage investor-owners to accept Section 8 housing vouchers/certificates.
- c. Create neighborhood networking opportunities to assist prospective renters to identify and access appropriate rental units.
- d. Work with housing organizations to renovate and manage rental properties throughout the neighborhood and to develop a strategy to target existing rental properties that are in danger of being lost due to poor condition but exhibit valued architectural style and integrity.
- e. Encourage academic institutions to make data available to students seeking information on off-campus rental properties including service, cleanliness and repair.

6. Continue to encourage the academic institutions and private developers to create additional residential options for students.

7. Initiate a program that provides guidance and coordination of alternative housing and service options for elderly neighborhood residents who desire to age in place.

## Goal 1

Promote a mix of housing options, including traditional and non-traditional home ownership and rental options that encourage and meet the needs of a diversity of residents

## Goal 2

Promote preservation and maintenance of high quality housing that respects the traditional style, scale, materials and detail of the housing stock

## Goal 2 – Quality of Housing

Promote preservation and maintenance of high quality housing that respects the traditional style, scale, materials and detail of the housing stock

### Action Strategies

1. Make code enforcement a high priority, particularly with wood-frame, one- and two-family structures that do not require Certificates of Occupancy inspections.
  - a. Petition the City to monitor investor-owned properties to assure that they obtain all necessary certificates, participate in the Rental Registry Program, and that their properties are code compliant.
  - b. Publicize and make code requirements accessible to all neighborhood residents, including students, inform them of their rights and responsibilities as tenants, and encourage them to report violations to the City Department of Code Enforcement.
  - c. Encourage collaborative advocacy among neighborhood organizations to send the message to the city that enforcement of existing codes is a significant concern in the neighborhood.
  - d. Encourage tenants to request city code inspections.
2. Educate all property owners to resources available to them to keep their homes in good condition.
  - a. Provide information to homeowners regarding various grant and loan programs that may be available to them for home repair.
  - b. Bring home improvement businesses and organizations into the neighborhood to put on “do it yourself” home improvement seminars.
  - c. Develop an inventory of businesses and organizations that provide home repair services and educate home owners how to select contractors, monitor work, and when to reimburse for work performed.
3. Identify and assist property owners who, due to age or income, are unable to provide adequate maintenance and repair of their properties.
  - a. Collaborate with educational institutions and housing and community organizations to create new programs or expand existing programs through which volunteers offer to provide organized and supervised short-term maintenance and repair of properties owned by people unable to provide proper care.
  - b. Develop strategies to deal with owner occupants living in significantly deteriorated and unsafe housing to obtain financing for rehabilitation or refer to appropriate organizations to locate more suitable housing.
4. Coordinate with local organizations to create an education and outreach program targeted at landlords and investment property owners based on research and case studies that show the relationship between high quality property maintenance, increased return on investment and long term neighborhood stability.

5. Develop a program that provides property owners and residents with guidance for renovations or improvements by a registered design professionals, for a nominal fee.
6. Develop a Pattern or Guidebook that recommends a palette of elements that complements existing architectural context and provides recommendations on how to adapt these elements into building renovation and restoration plans.
7. Survey neighborhood properties to identify those that should be added to the city's list of properties "eligible" for historic designation to ensure involvement of the Landmark Preservation Board.
8. Nominate potential neighborhood historic districts or sites so owners can take advantage of historic tax credits.

### **Goal 3 – Westcott Business District**

Strengthen the Westcott Business District as a walkable mixed use shopping, gathering and entertainment destination

#### **Action Strategies**

1. Support the efforts of the Westcott Business District merchants to form a business association and support their advocacy for amenities that are good for residents and good for business.
  - a. Study area parking usage and availability to develop an appropriate parking and access plan, including consideration for shared parking and parking requirements that acknowledge the walkability of the neighborhood.
  - b. Prepare a market study to determine appropriate and synergistic new businesses in the district and to develop strategies to attract them.
  - c. Work with the city planning departments to study extension of the Westcott Business District to the south, allowing mixed use development, additional businesses and business density, to increase the variety and attractiveness to customers.
  - d. Develop and implement a sidewalk snow removal strategy to ensure access to businesses.
  - e. Encourage the city to consistently enforce codes to ensure that mandated maintenance and care standards are maintained.
2. Encourage collaborative efforts between business association and neighborhood organizations.
  - a. Incorporate merchants into programs and activities sponsored by neighborhood organizations.
  - b. Invite merchants to participate actively in neighborhood organizational governance as decision-makers.
  - c. Update the WENA "Renaissance Plan" for the business district to illustrate a comprehensive strategic vision and through broad participation of businesses and residents create energy for its implementation
  - d. Encourage resident patronage of Westcott Business District merchants.

### **Goal 2**

Promote preservation and maintenance of high quality housing that respects the traditional style, scale, materials and detail of the housing stock

### **Goal 3**

Strengthen the Westcott Business District as a walkable mixed use shopping, gathering and entertainment destination

## Goal 4

Strengthen the characteristics that support a high quality of life in the neighborhood

## Goal 4 – Quality of Life

Strengthen the characteristics that support a high quality of life in the neighborhood

### Action Strategies

1. Prepare and implement a comprehensive University Neighborhood Street and Circulation Plan that documents existing conditions and proposes improvements to the sidewalk, open space and street environment to encourage walking, bicycling and bus transportation.
  - a. Ensure hazard-free sidewalks for pedestrians, including snow removal.
  - b. Promote alternatives to the use of motorized vehicles.
  - c. Determine residential and prime stakeholder on-street parking needs to assure residents throughout the neighborhood have first access to available parking.
  - d. Explore the possibility of a resident parking permit program.
  - e. Increase public transportation options in the University/Westcott neighborhood.
2. Initiate an urban design study of the Euclid and Westcott corridors that acknowledges their significance in the neighborhood.
  - a. Integrate the concepts of “Complete Streets” to provide a safe and attractive corridor for all users including bicyclists, vehicles and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
  - b. Understand and respect the valued built form and urban design characteristics
  - c. Encourage land use patterns that respect the residential neighborhood scale and density, and that reinforce the existing neighborhood business districts.
3. Highlight neighborhood public realm, including gateways and circulation routes, to communicate and celebrate image and identity through both temporary and permanent improvements.
  - a. Coordinate public investments in gateway improvements with private investments in gateway properties.
  - b. Encourage volunteer efforts for landscape and planting improvements, including neighborhood organizations and academic design programs.
4. Promote the use of neighborhood parks and green space.
  - a. Educate neighborhood residents to programs and amenities at neighborhood parks.
  - b. Encourage neighborhood schools, organizations and other institutions to plan and carry out activities that take advantage of the natural and built amenities in neighborhood parks.
  - c. Encourage “orphan neighborhood parks,” to be adopted by a neighborhood group to assure appropriate use and maintenance of park amenities.

- d. Encourage the creation of five year plans for each neighborhood park through a participatory planning process with park associations.
- e. Strengthen connections between parks and open spaces to create a neighborhood “green infrastructure”.

5. Promote and market neighborhood schools and other neighborhood institutions, reinforcing their positive presence in the neighborhood.

- a. Assist these institutions to promote their activities to neighborhood residents.
- b. Encourage neighborhood residents to volunteer time and resources to these institutions.

6. Encourage the city to make maintenance of existing infrastructure a high priority, using existing organizations to communicate problems to City staff for remediation.

7. Develop better mechanisms for monitoring crimes and quality of life infractions in the neighborhood and responding to high crime locations.

- a. If the Neighborhood Safety Patrol is to continue to be supported, develop a tool for reporting activities and collecting unanswered complaints that is accessible by residents.
- b. Develop strategies for frequent communication with law enforcement regarding criminal activity and appropriate individual/neighborhood response.
- c. Assist neighborhood residents to establish Neighborhood Watch or other crime deterrent programs.

## **Goal 5 – Citizen Engagement and Partnerships**

Encourage involvement of all residents in neighborhood activities and organizations and promote dialogue and strong partnerships with the academic institutions.

### **Action Strategies**

- 1. Encourage the academic institutions to inform their undergraduate students that moving off-campus is a privilege, not a right, reserved for those students who have demonstrated that they can live responsibly in a community with residents of all ages and backgrounds.
  - a. Develop specific policies that address off campus living expectations and “good neighbor guidelines” that at least equal the expectations for students living in institution owned housing.
  - b. Freshmen and sophomores with a history of serious behavioral infractions should not be allowed to live off-campus when they become juniors and seniors.
  - c. Develop meaningful penalties for violations, such as undergraduates living off-campus should be required to immediately return to campus housing if they demonstrate behaviors incompatible with a family neighborhood.

## **Goal 4**

Strengthen the characteristics that support a high quality of life in the neighborhood

## **Goal 5**

Encourage involvement of all residents in neighborhood activities and organizations and promote dialogue and strong partnerships with the academic institutions.

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Encourage involvement of all residents in neighborhood activities and organizations and promote dialogue and strong partnerships with the academic institutions.

2. Distribute the University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan through various methods to reach a broad neighborhood, institutional and agency audience. Encourage discussion and involvement among these multiple stakeholders that can contribute to its implementation and continuation.
  - a. Prepare an illustrated version of an Executive Summary and Vision, Goals and Actions that can be printed for distribution at neighborhood events, to new or prospective residents, businesses and posted or linked to various websites.
  - b. Prepare a narrated powerpoint or other scripted presentation that describes and illustrates the plan and the process of its creation which can be available on line or for use for in-person presentations.
  - c. Convene a series of meetings to present the plan, and background data and findings to representatives of neighborhood organizations, University Hill institutions, businesses, and agencies and facilitate discussions to promote their support and involvement and development of an action plan.
3. Develop strategies for welcoming new residents to the neighborhood.
  - a. Develop “welcome wagon” programs to bring new residents information about the neighborhood and neighborhood amenities.
  - b. Encourage new residents to get involved in the civic life of the neighborhood via neighborhood organizations and TNT.
  - c. Use information gathered during the housing plan process to develop materials or programs that introduce new residents to the neighborhood life, valued places, historic homes and features, and important practices and events through the eyes of neighborhood residents. Tap design and marketing faculty and students from ESF and SU to help with this effort
  - d. Encourage Syracuse University’s Office of Off-campus and Commuter Services to continue to welcome new off-campus students and give them information about living in the neighborhood, in collaboration with other neighborhood organizations. Consider coordinating this effort with the SU Neighborhood Ambassadors program so that the welcome is planned by students familiar with the neighborhood
  - e. Encourage permanent neighborhood residents to personally welcome student neighbors and talk to them about rights and responsibilities of living in an urban neighborhood and the history of and historical nature of their residences.
4. Create a multi-year participatory action research project to continue the study of university - neighborhood relationships.
  - a. Seek funding through foundations interested in developing strong community- university relationships, building collaborative leadership and community capacity, and exhibiting democracy in action.
  - b. Analyze the effectiveness of the existing programs; prepare case study research into other university neighborhood examples; schedule regular presentations and discussion of findings, and implement projects and programs based on the research results.

5. Develop better communication between the Westcott police storefront, neighborhood organizations and residents. Preliminary discussions to outline issues and strategies could be accomplished by a task force or working group composed of collaborative minded representatives of each group.
6. Promote community pride in the neighborhood through both traditional events and cutting edge approaches that attract existing residents and visitors.
  - a. Expand or create walking tours that highlight settlement history and structural and landscape details that represent the different settlement periods.
  - b. Explore the use of new technologies, such as Apps, to creatively communicate information about the neighborhood, such as general history and architectural styles. Enlist the help of students and young adults to plan the communication methods.
  - c. Organize neighborhood walking tours and “meet the neighborhood” events specifically for students and their parents.
  - d. Develop an annual award program that recognizes property owners for appropriate renovations and improvements.

## Goal 5

Encourage involvement of all residents in neighborhood activities and organizations and promote dialogue and strong partnerships with the academic institutions.



### NORTHEAST THORNDEN PARK

Area has an interesting eclectic mix of housing styles, and renters and owner occupants. Encourage maintenance of at least 50% owner occupancy. Highlight characteristics that area is close to Thornden Park and Westcott Business District. Gateway to northern section of the neighborhood. Highlight Sumner School (PEACE Inc Headstart Program) and historic homes (e.g. Stickley House)

### WESTCOTT GATEWAY

Celebrate northern gateway to neighborhood starting with renewal of Babcock Shaddock House. Encourage maintenance of at least 50% owner occupancy. Highlight characteristics that area is close to Westcott Business District and accessible to downtown via East Genesee Street.

### LEVY SCHOOL

Historic and interesting architecture. Focus on near to mid- term conversion of Levy School for senior housing to fill need in the neighborhood and serve as stabilizing force in area of concern. Emphasize proximity to Westcott Business District, library and access to downtown via East Genesee Street.

### WESTERN CORE - "ZONE OF HIGHEST MARKET POTENTIAL"

**Short Term** - High student rental property concentration. Focus on code enforcement, student behavior and quality of life programs.

**Short to Midterm** - Encourage conversion back to owner-occupancy for at least 50 to 75% of properties in key areas to have impact and expansion potential:

1. Area around Sumner, Thornden Park and SU with existing high percentage of Owner Occupancy
2. Area adjacent to Berkeley Park, centered on Livingston with existing high percentage of Owner Occupancy
3. Area within walking distance of Ed Smith School and centrally located to parks.

**Long Term** - promote proximity to institutions, centers of employment and cultural opportunities . Encourage mix of condos, single family and rentals respecting historic architecture, residential scale and character.

### BERKELEY PARK

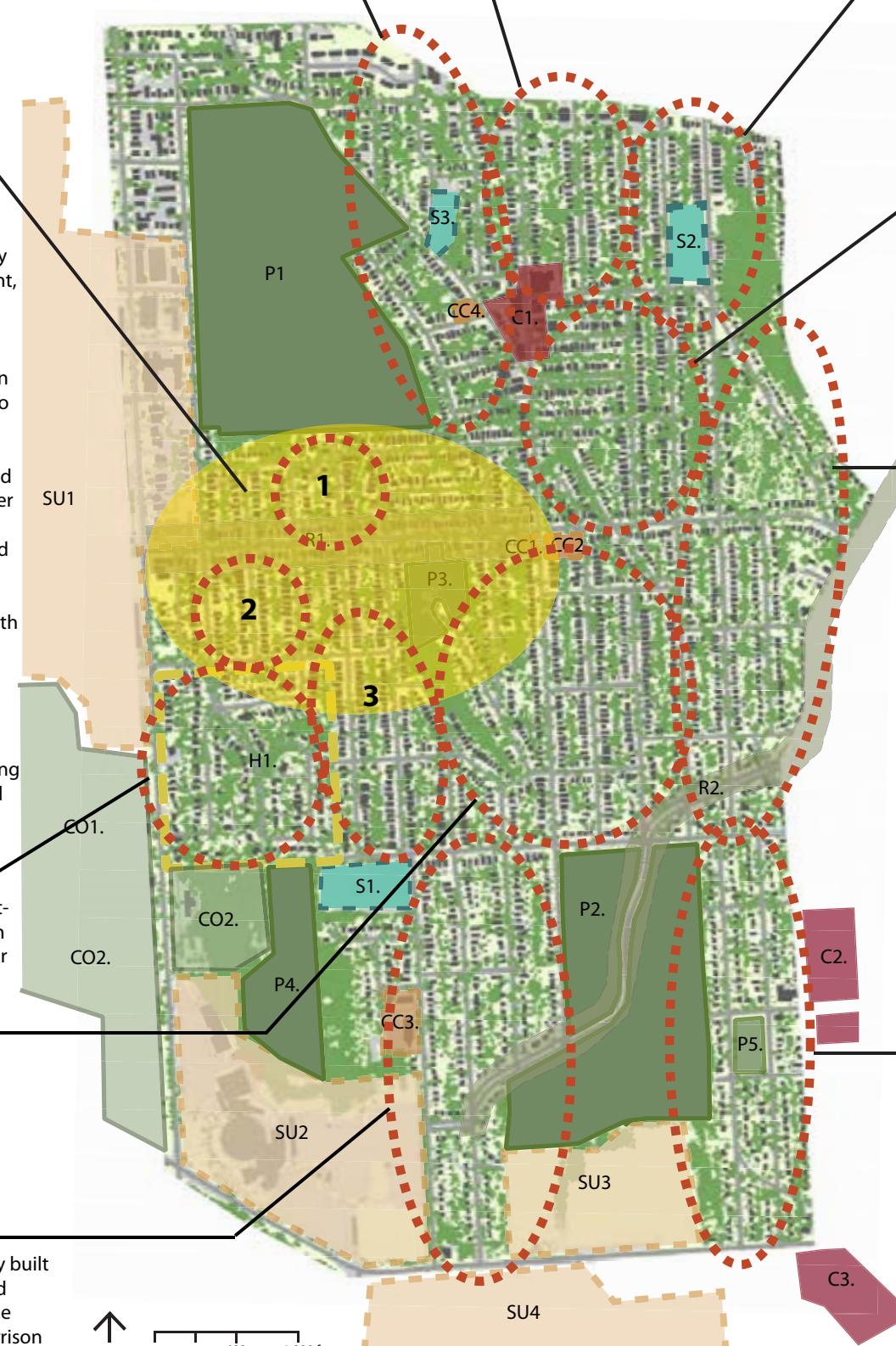
Historic district and large homes, not suitable for Certificate of Suitability. Maintain at least existing high percentage of owner occupancy.

### CENTRAL CORE

Historic and interesting houses. A place of choice - Well connected to parks, Ed Smith School, midway between retail areas. Mix of housing options for ownership and rental. Maintain at least current level of owner occupancy.

### SOUTH CENTRAL GATEWAY

Mix of two family and smaller single family built after 1950s. Promote close proximity to Ed Smith School, parks and church. Encourage future reuse and conversion of Bishop Harrison Center for condos or longer term rentals.



#### Syracuse University

- SU1. Main Campus
- SU2. Manley Field House
- SU3. Hookway Athletic Fields
- SU4. South Campus

#### Schools

- S1. Ed Smith School - SCSD
- S2. Levy School - SCSD
- S3. Sumner School - PEACE Inc

#### Cemetery Open Space

- CO1. Oakwood Cemetery
- CO2. Morningside Cemetery

#### National Historic District

- H1. Berkeley Park

Note: Oakwood Cemetery and Thornden Park are on the National Historic Register. There are also individual houses in the neighborhood on the National and Local Historic Registers, or are eligible to be listed.

#### Commercial Areas

- C1. Westcott Business District
- C2. Nottingham Plaza
- C3. Tops Plaza

#### Valued Road Corridors

- R1. Euclid Avenue
- R2. Meadowbrook Avenue

#### Parks/Open Space

- P1. Thornden Park
- P2. Barry Park/Meadowbrook
- P3. Westmoreland Park
- P4. Morningside Water Tower
- P5. Sherman Field

#### Community Centers/Places of Worship

- CC1. Westcott Community Center
- CC2. Erwin United Methodist Church
- CC3. All Souls Church
- CC4. Baptist Church

Source of land cover map base: University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. 2011. Syracuse High-Resolution Land Cover 2010. Online: <http://www.uvm.edu/~joneildu/downloads/FOS/Syracuse/>

## Housing and Market Strategy Diagram

## University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan

## Key to Gateways and Green Infrastructure Symbols

- Major gateway: A blue circle with an orange dot inside, representing a major gateway.
- Minor gateway: A blue circle, representing a minor gateway.
- Important neighborhood intersection: A purple circle, representing an important neighborhood intersection.
- Priority "complete streets" corridor with green infrastructure: A purple line, representing a priority corridor.
- Green infrastructure corridor: A green line, representing a green infrastructure corridor.

Major gateways are important zones of welcome and introduction to the neighborhood. While there should be some consistency in elements, each gateway should reflect the positive image and identity the section of the neighborhood it occupies. Consider also the cues from the adjacent area or institution. Major gateways should be oriented towards pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

Minor gateway are also important entries into the neighborhood but function more for local resident access. Design and detailing should be oriented toward the scale and speed of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Important neighborhood intersections may be decision points to reach major resources and destinations in the neighborhood or they may be major destinations because of activities located there. Landscape features such as special paving, planting, lighting and signage can highlight their significance and aid with wayfinding.



## Key to Neighborhood Resources and Destinations

- Syracuse University**
  - SU1. Main Campus
  - SU2. Manley Field House
  - SU3. Hookway Athletic Fields
  - SU4. South Campus
- Commercial Areas**
  - C1. Westcott Business District
  - C2. Nottingham Plaza
  - C3. Tops Plaza
- Parks/Open Space**
  - P1. Thornden Park
  - P2. Barry Park/Meadowbrook
  - P3. Westmoreland Park
  - P4. Morningside Water Tower
  - P5. Sherman Field
- Schools**
  - S1. Ed Smith School - SCSD
  - S2. Levy School - SCSD
  - S3. Sumner School - PEACE Inc
- Valued Road Corridors**
  - R1. Euclid Avenue
  - R2. Meadowbrook Avenue
- Community Centers/Places of Worship**
  - CC1. Westcott Community Center
  - CC2. Erwin United Methodist Church
  - CC3. All Souls Church
  - CC4. Baptist Church
- Cemetery Open Space**
  - CO1. Oakwood Cemetery
  - CO2. Morningside Cemetery
- National Historic District**
  - H1. Berkeley Park

Note: Oakwood Cemetery and Thornden Park are on the National Historic Register. There are also individual houses in the neighborhood on the National and Local Historic Registers, or are eligible to be listed.

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# Gateways and Green Infrastructure University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan

## Appendix 1 - Process Overview and First Stage Process and Results

Intent and Process

First Stage Process and Results

Workshop Results Posters

First Stage presentation

## **Appendix 1: Process Overview and First Stage Process**

### **Intent and Process**

The process to develop the University/Westcott Neighborhood and Housing Plan was specifically designed with the intent to engage the broad range of residents and other stakeholders. An Advisory Committee was created with representation from UNPA, SEUNA, WENA and SPOA for the purpose of ensuring diverse involvement, develop the process and to guide the plan development. This committee met at least monthly.

Neighborhood Forums were the primary method chosen to involve residents and other stakeholders in the development of the plan. These were held at Erwin First United Methodist Church, located centrally in the neighborhood, and everyone was welcome to attend. These events were set up as workshops with individual and small group activities which allowed participants to contribute ideas and answer questions as well as hear what others were contributing.

There were three specific groups, College and University representatives, Westcott Business District owners, and Syracuse University students for which different information gathering methods were initially used. The College and University representatives participated in a meeting that was organized with the assistance of Syracuse University director of Off Campus and Commuting Students. The director also helped organize and facilitate a meeting with SU student representatives, including a couple of SU Student Ambassadors who live in the neighborhood. Business district owners were interviewed individually at their place of business responding to a standard series of questions; if they were not able to participate for an in-person interview, several filled in and returned the questionnaire. Those that participated through these meetings or interviews were invited to participate in the neighborhood forums.

For those not able or desiring to attend the forums the team also prepared questionnaires based on the first stage questions that could be filled out and returned. These were available at the Petit Branch Library, and distributed in person or by mail based on recommendations from the advisory committee.

The process was organized into three stages.

1. The first stage was designed to uncover and understand the neighborhood, primarily through the varied perspectives of those that live, work or own businesses in the neighborhood. Through the interview questions and workshop activities shared values, assets and strengths, issues and concerns, opportunities and resources were documented and confirmed. Through analysis of this data, preliminary goals were developed.

2. During the second stage possible ways of achieving the neighborhood goals were developed and considered, through alternative action strategies and physical design interventions. The project team expanded to include students in the SUNY ESF Department of Landscape Architecture Community Design and Planning thematic studio. The students worked with community members to explore priority issues in greater depth at a second neighborhood forum and prepared design studies which they presented and discussed at a special presentation forum.

3. In the final stage the project team worked closely with the advisory committee to refine the goals and action strategies, and to perform more in-depth research and develop specific recommendations around priority issues. The final draft plan that emerged from this entire process was presented in a final neighborhood forum during which those present had the opportunity to help prioritize action strategies and brainstorm methods to distribute the plan broadly.

### **First Stage Process and Results**

Following are summaries of the forums and meetings held with stakeholders during the first stage, organized by event. Posters depicting many of these results follow the text.

A series of questions were asked during the first stage:

- What first attracted you to the neighborhood and what keeps here?
- What are the strengths of the neighborhood?
- What are the challenges of the neighborhood?
- What are highly valued or cherished areas in the neighborhood?
- What are areas of concern?
- What are the characteristics of the housing that you want to keep?
- What are characteristics of the housing that you want to change?
- What are characteristics of the neighborhood that you want to keep?
- How do you want to be able to describe the neighborhood in 10 years?

## **Neighborhood Forum organization**

The first neighborhood forums were held on Saturday, December 4, 2010 from 2 to 4 pm, and Tuesday December 7, from 7 to 9 pm, at Erwin First United Methodist church. Approximately 55 people attended the first forums.

## **Neighborhood Forum 1 Findings**

(Summary posters can be found at the end of the First Stage section)

The responses from each forum activity were documented and analyzed separately. Findings were then synthesized to discover themes or distinct ideas across related questions.

The entry survey posed open ended questions intended to get people thinking about the neighborhood. Responses indicated participants were first attracted to the neighborhood for a variety of reasons with many describing a relationship to Syracuse University or ESF.

They stay in the neighborhood because of its location as a convenient city neighborhood, close to the university and to downtown, including for many proximity to their jobs. There is a strong sense of community and being part of a neighborhood with uses and activities that support an interesting quality of life. Students cite they are here because of ESF, SU and other academic institutions and stay because of their education. Personal relationships can be strong with close neighbors, family and college friends.

As might be expected there is an overlap between some of the reasons cited for the desire to stay in the neighborhood and its strengths. These assets are the qualities and resources that the neighborhood should build on and use to best advantage. In their open-ended responses, participants noted the diversity of neighborhood residents, the location, the sense of community reinforced by local businesses, a distinct neighborhood culture, the architecture and character of the houses, and the availability of public transportation. Many of these were reinforced in the group discussion of characteristics of the housing and the neighborhood to keep.

The challenges described in participant responses can be thought of as problems or concerns that they would like to have addressed or resolved in some way. The themes or categories of concerns included the cost of housing in relationship to its value, transient residents, safety and crime, maintenance of private property, parking and traffic issues, and communication. These and other concerns were reiterated in more detail during the group discussion of characteristics of housing and the neighborhood to change.

By quantifying and mapping small group brainstorming results about Valued Areas in the neighborhood, stakeholders can see the areas that are particularly important and play significant roles in the neighborhood. Those areas that received highest mention across all groups are Thornden Park, Barry Park and the Westcott Business District. The next highest ranking included the Westcott Community Center, the Real Food Coop and Ed Smith School, followed by Berkeley Park, Syracuse University and Nottingham Plaza, and then a number of less shared responses. While it is important to know which are the most highly valued places in the neighborhood, it is equally important to understand the reasons why these places are significant. Mentioned most frequently for multiple places is proximity and the fact that these places are within walking distance of many of the par-

ticipants. Other reasons cited include recreation, contribution to community identity, gathering spaces, beauty or aesthetics, local business, architecture and economic generator. A number of places had two or more reasons why they are important to the community. In considering changes to these places or the surrounding area that will potentially impact them, policy and decision makers should delve into the reasons why they are important and perhaps cherished by the community.

Areas of Concern are those that stakeholders identified in small group discussion as having problems or troubling issues. Most of these are perceived as negatively impacting the quality of life in the neighborhood and its desirability as a place to live. Places of highest mention are the west end of Euclid Avenue and the northern part of the neighborhood near East Genesee Street, then Thornden Park, the Westcott Business District, Levy School and the water tower area. As with Valued Places, understanding the reasons why these areas are of concern will help frame and prioritize the solutions. In relative order, these include safety and crime issues, deteriorating architecture, parking related issues, poor street conditions, lack of respect for public space, illegal and illicit activities, vacant structures and lack of preservation of valued character.

The relative importance of the Valued Places and Places of Concern, and themes which underlay these designations are documented in the poster titled “Areas of Value and Concern to the Community”, found at the end of this section.

Invariably every community has places that are highly valued but also places of concern. Thornden Park and the Westcott Business District share these dual designations. These might be considered priority areas, first to better understand the concerns and then to address them so that these places retain their highly valued status and continue to make positive contributions to the neighborhood. Thornden Park is valued for its role as community gathering place, the range of recreational opportunities available and the beauty of the rose garden but concerns were expressed about safety and crime, especially at night. Westcott Business District is valued because of its close proximity, its contribution to the neighborhood identity, its setting as community gatherings, appearance, the local businesses and as an economic generator. Concerns were expressed about the care of public space, safety and crime issues, traffic and parking conditions, and a desire for broader mix of businesses.

The Housing and Neighborhood Keep and Change activity was designed to first allow participants to respond to questions individually then share their responses with their larger table group. Individuals then used dots to designate the priority characteristics or aspects to Keep and those to Change from the list developed by their table group. The results of all groups were documented and major themes were identified through analysis of the data. The results are documented in two posters located at the end of the section, “Housing Characteristics Keep and Change” and “Neighborhood Keep and Change”.

Housing Characteristics to Keep in relative order of priority include:

1. Houses and their Cherished Characteristics. This was the highest priority, across all groups; almost all participants thought that the architectural character, style, diversity, details, quality of construction were important to retain. Specifically mentioned were porches and historic homes.
2. Owner occupants: A majority of the groups mentioned and prioritized owner occupants as a characteristic to keep.
3. Diversity of residents: More than half also listed and prioritized the desire to keep a diversity of residents, with specific mention of a diversity of housing options opportunities that will house a variety of residents, including rentals.
4. High quality maintenance
5. Affordability

The most frequently cited Characteristic of Housing to Change:

1. Code enforcement, including improving enforcement of existing code, and proactive code enforcement.

While this is actually a strategy to accomplish desired changes, it was major concern of many participants.

2. Condition and appearance of the housing stock, although there were varied ways the problems and reasons were described. These included property deterioration (both owner occupied and rental), poor quality renovations, removal or porches, poor quality and deferred maintenance, and abandoned homes.
3. The concentration of student renters was a concern noted by about half of the groups with the stated desires to restore balance and stability and relieve overcrowding.
4. Landlords that do not take good care of their properties with specific mention of absentee landlords and poor management, and the concern that some are sapping value without reinvestment, including the turnovers that occur in parent owned properties. (footnote)
5. Neighborhood characteristics related to housing including sidewalks and garbage issues, parking and parking congestion especially in high density student areas, and the desire to change housing pricing related to the fact that housing prices are higher here than in other areas of the city and inflated due to demand by student renters.

The Neighborhood Characteristics to Keep and Change were documented, analyzed and prioritized by a similar process to the Housing Characteristics.

Neighborhood Characteristics to Keep are those that contribute to the desirability of the neighborhood as a great place to live. In relative order of priority participants described the following:

1. Walkability and ease of walking in the neighborhood, including destinations within walking distance, such as the parks and the business district
2. Bus system and ease of access to other areas in Syracuse
3. Environment to support a good pedestrian experience, which include installation and care of street trees
4. Parks and open space resources
5. Westcott Street area, noted for its fairs and festivals, the Westcott theatre and the community center

Neighborhood Characteristics to Change are strongly related to the characteristics that community members wanted to keep in the neighborhood. In order of priority characteristics to change include:

1. Walkability, including inconsistent snow removal, disrepair of some sidewalks improving the walkability of Euclid as a major ‘collector’ in the neighborhood.
2. Cars and their negative impact, including parking challenges, vehicle congestion, and hazards for pedestrians and bicyclists
3. Bus system to address inconsistent schedules, insufficient routes and stops, and not enough bus shelters
4. The quality of the public schools
5. Student resident behavior and related issues of noise, trash and disrespect for neighbors
6. Listed but not prioritized – safety and security, and care and maintenance of the public and semi-public landscape

### Vision Activity

The final activity of the first stage forums and questionnaire asked participants to write a response to the question, “How do you want to be able to describe the neighborhood in 10 years?” Responses were documented and coded and the following major themes emerged:

- Stabilization/balance/equalization of renters to owner occupants
- Diversity of residents
- Active community with better cooperation
- High standard of care for properties
- Walkable neighborhood
- Safe and active bike and bus routes
- Thriving business district
- Integrity of architectural features

These themes would be synthesized with the other data to develop a draft vision statement.

## Westcott Business Owners

The in-person interviews and mail in questionnaires resulted in responses from 15 business district owners or managers. The results of these open-ended questions are documented on a summary poster at the end of this section. Overall, of the business owners were very positive about being located in the district and really valued the location, the scale and character and the customer base. The major findings are summarized in the following themes:

- Market – In general business owners specifically chose the Westcott business district because they perceived it as a desirable location for an existing business or they created a business to respond to the demographics. Some businesses rely primarily on students and see their business drop off when many students are away during university breaks, but most have a mixed market that includes long term or permanent residents and visitors from outside of the neighborhood. Suggestions for new businesses include those which would bring new customers into the district who would also take advantage of existing businesses; and which would add to the diversity of businesses.
- Parking – There is a mix of opinions about parking. Some owners expressed satisfaction with the amount of parking available although some customers do not know where it is located and that there is the perception that there is not enough parking. A few more said that there is not enough parking, especially at night. Several were unhappy with the parking meters and the strict enforcement of time limits by city meter readers.
- Pedestrian Environment – Having walk by traffic and being in a setting that encourages walking from the neighborhood is important to many business owners. Several commented that the environment could use improvement, including a system of snow removal.
- Personal interactions – Several owners commented that they appreciate the loyalty and support of their customers, people are nice, and that there are good relationships with other business owners.
- Diverse neighborhood – Several owners stated they valued the Westcott neighborhood because of its diversity, in age, ethnicity, students to long term residents.

## University Representatives

Five Representatives from Syracuse University, one from LeMoyne College and one from the Syracuse Police Department participated in a focus group session in which they answered a series of questions, some of which were similar to those asked in the community forums and some of which were specific to the institutions practices and plans that might be related to the neighborhood. Responses to general neighborhood questions have been synthesized with the neighborhood forum data. Following is a summary of the major findings from the institution specific questions:

- Strengths of the neighborhood in relationship to their students and their institutions:
  - SU is an economic driver and large employer of neighborhood residents
  - Students bring money into the neighborhood, and there are other higher income residents
- Challenges of the neighborhood in relationship to their students
  - Student renters present opportunities for crime due to not locking doors, having designated breaks when few people are around and being a transient population with high turnover rate from year to year
    - Absentee or incompliant landlords which results in poor building conditions and maintenance, illegal occupancy of homes that do not have a certificate of suitability, poor neighbor relations because there is no one for the university to contact, and some housing conditions are very poor and/or unsafe
      - Sense that there is not enough quality, affordable housing for student or for others who want to rent
- Syracuse University's stake in the neighborhood:
  - Safe close place for students, faculty and staff to live
  - Marketing benefit for parents of students to have high quality neighborhood nearby so that students don't need to have a car
    - Desire for more and safe (code compliant) rental housing for both students and professionals

- According to SU representatives, the Chancellor wants students to be treated the same whether in on-campus or off-campus housing. The neighborhood is perceived as an extension of the University
- LeMoyne's Stake in the neighborhood is minor or non-existent since very few of their students live in this neighborhood
- Interaction of SU with the Neighborhood
  - Relationship is sometimes strained but positive and improving – SU is taking more active role in addressing student behavior
    - SU uses multiple forms of media to communicate including email, newsletter and to disseminate many different type of news, such as criminal activity and tree planting
    - SU's neighborhood ambassador program provides stipends to selected students to live on targeted blocks and serve as the in-neighborhood representatives, being attentive to problems and keeping neighbors in the communication loop; they welcome students at the start of the semester.
    - Other programs working well include the Neighborhood Safety Patrol, which involves cooperation between residents, SU Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Syracuse Police Department in response to student safety concerns and quality of life issues. The NSP is funded by an UNSAAC grant.
    - SU representatives feel that utilizing the student code of conduct to address off-campus student behavior issues is working well for SU, ESF and LeMoyne students
    - The biggest issues from the perspective of the University representatives are the parties, large mobs of people looking for parties, the parking and trash cans. Of the 112 tickets issued in fall 2010 semester, 43% were to other than SU students (but it was not discussed who the others were or if they reside in the neighborhood). A growing problem has been groups of high school students looking for parties in the neighborhood.
- Institutional Housing Policies (taken from institutions websites)
  - SU requires that all freshman and sophomores, including transfers, live in University housing unless an exemption is obtained.
  - ESF requires all freshman live on-campus unless their permanent home address is within commuting distance
  - LeMoyne requires that all undergraduate students live in campus housing unless living with parent or guardian; seniors may petition to live off campus.
- Demand for Student housing in the neighborhood
  - There was general agreement that the demand for close in rentals will continue even with the recent and currently planned construction of new student housing

### **Synthesis of First Stage Activities**

Areas of Agreement – Looking across all of the activity responses, the results were synthesized into priorities around which there seemed to be agreement.

Strengths, Resources and Highly Valued characteristics, which stakeholders desire to keep and build on:

- Houses in the neighborhood, including their architectural style, details and age
- Diversity of residents
- Location, and proximity to university and other areas of the city
- Community resources, including parks and the business district
- Walkability

Concerns and Challenges, which stakeholders desire to change and improve:

- Declining condition and appearance of some houses
- Poor care of some property

- Parking and congestion
- Poor communication among stakeholders
- Safety and security

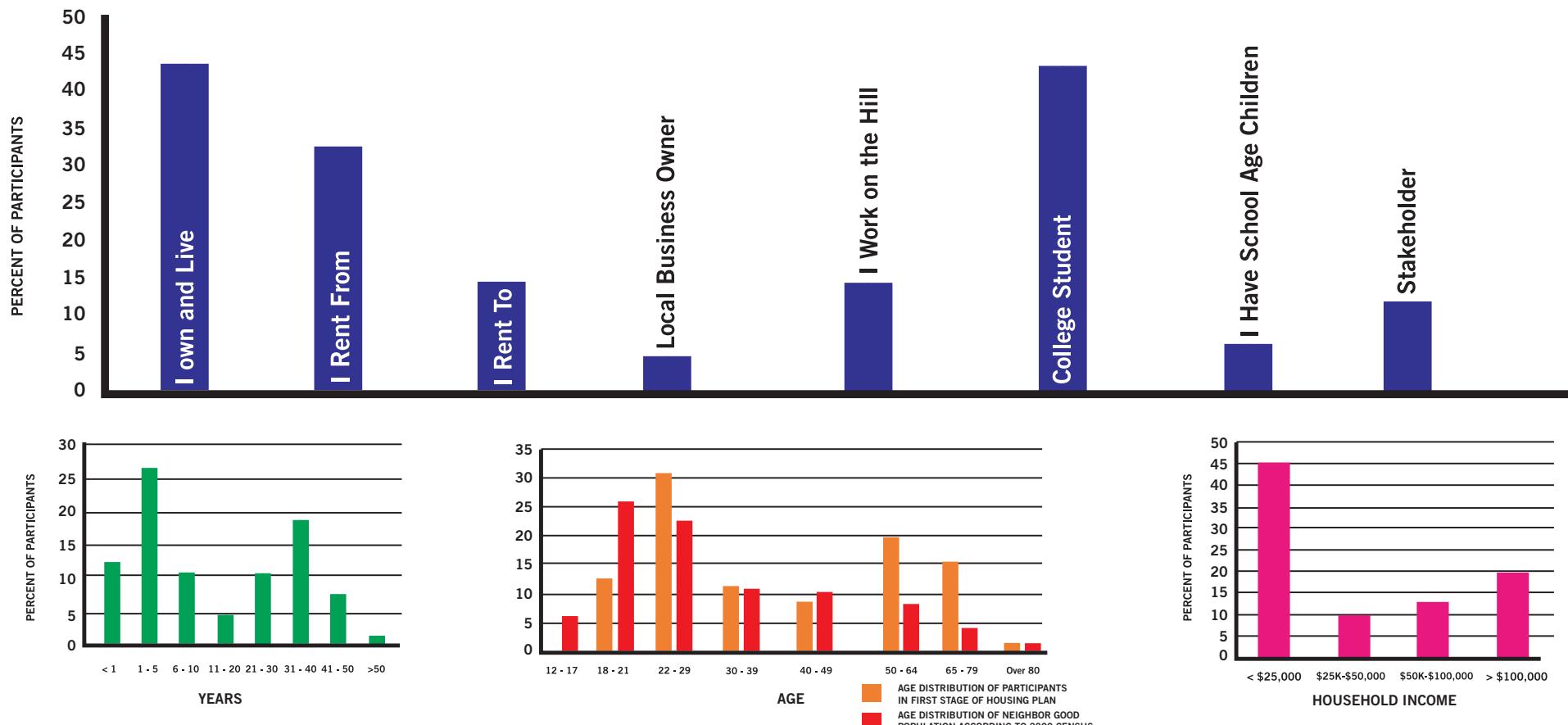
#### Contradictions or areas of divergence

- Housing values – desire by some to keep it affordable but prices seem to be inflated due to demand for rentals
- Balance of renter and owner occupied
- Desirability or possibility to alleviate concentration of students in western portion of the neighborhood

Based on the analysis and synthesis of the first stage data, broad topical themes emerged for the primary goals which would provide the framework for the plan:

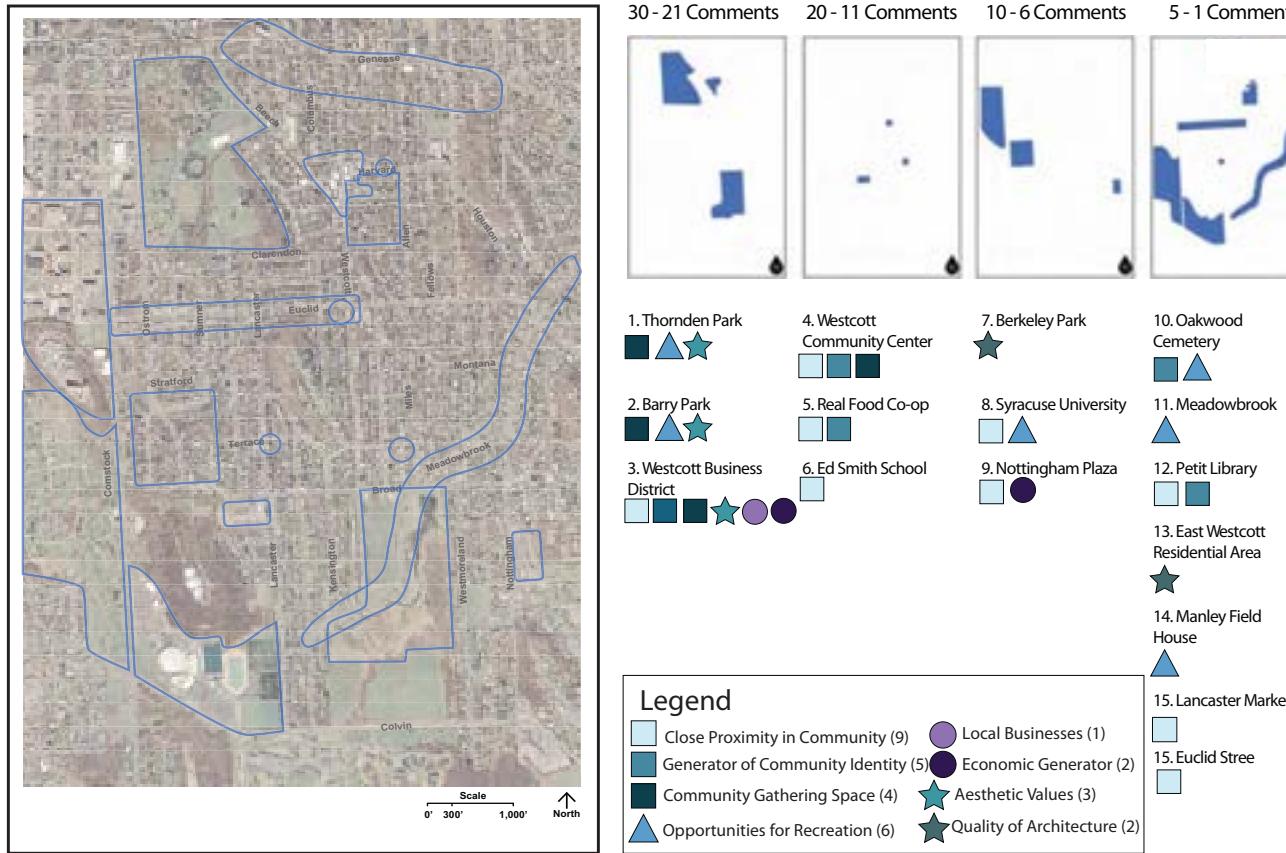
- The traditional physical characteristics of the houses and the neighborhood
- Diversity and housing choices
- Care and stewardship of private and public property
- Reduced reliance on cars, and alternative transportation and circulation
- Neighborhood resource, for example, the Westcott Business District and the parks
- Public Education and life-long learning
- Neighborhood safety and security

## PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS



CATEGORY OF INTEREST	KEEP ME IN N.HOOD	STRENGTH	CHALLENGE	KEEP ME IN NEIGHBORHOOD	STRENGTH	CHALLENGE
DIVERSITY OF RESIDENTS / PEOPLE	●	●	●	DIVERSITY	NEIGHBORHOOD SPIRIT	LIVING WITH STUDENTS
LOCATION	●	●		PROXIMITY TO UNIVERSITY	BUSINESSES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE	
COMMUNITY / LOCAL BUSINESSES	●	●		GOOD PEOPLE AND ACTIVITIES	NICE PEOPLE, FORWARD THINKING INDIVIDUALS, ACTION ORIENTED	
HOUSING	●		●	LOCATION OF HOMES		TOO MANY RENTERS, INCREASED REGULATIONS IN TURN DECREASED PROPERTY VALUE, INCREASED PROPERTY TAXES
TRANSIENT RESIDENCES			●			QUALITY OF LIVING, NO STAKE IN NEIGHBORHOOD, RENTING & OWNER OCCUPIED BALANCE
SAFETY			●			PETTY CRIME, VANDALISM, ROBBERIES
PUBLIC SIDEWALKS & PUBLIC SPACE			●			LACK OF UPKEEP, SNOW REMOVAL, STUDENTS LITTER / POOR GARBAGE REMOVAL
CULTURE		●			UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS, ACTIVE RESIDENTS	
ZONING ENFORCEMENT & PRIVATE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE			●			LANDLORD APATHY, DETERIORATING PROPERTIES
PARKING & TRAFFIC			●			INADEQUATE PARKING FOR RENTERS, EACH STUDENT OWNS A CAR
EDUCATION / STUDENT	●			PROXIMITY TO MULTIPLE UNIVERSITIES		
COMMUNICATION			●			BRIDGING GAPS BETWEEN UNIVERSITY & COMMUNITY
ARCHITECTURE		●			CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMES, BEAUTIFUL DETAILS	
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION		●			ACCESS TO MASS TRANSIT, RELIABLE BUS SYSTEM	
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS	●			NEIGHBORS, SENSE OF COMMUNITY, COLLEGE FRIENDS, FAMILY		
WORK	●			GOOD PROXIMITY TO WORK FOR THE ACADEMICALLY EMPLOYED		

## Areas of Value to Community



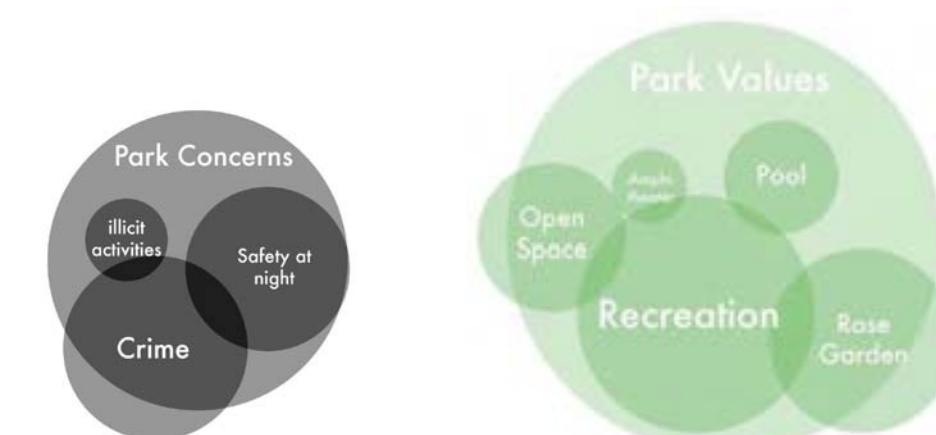
## Areas of Value and concern to Community - Thornden Park



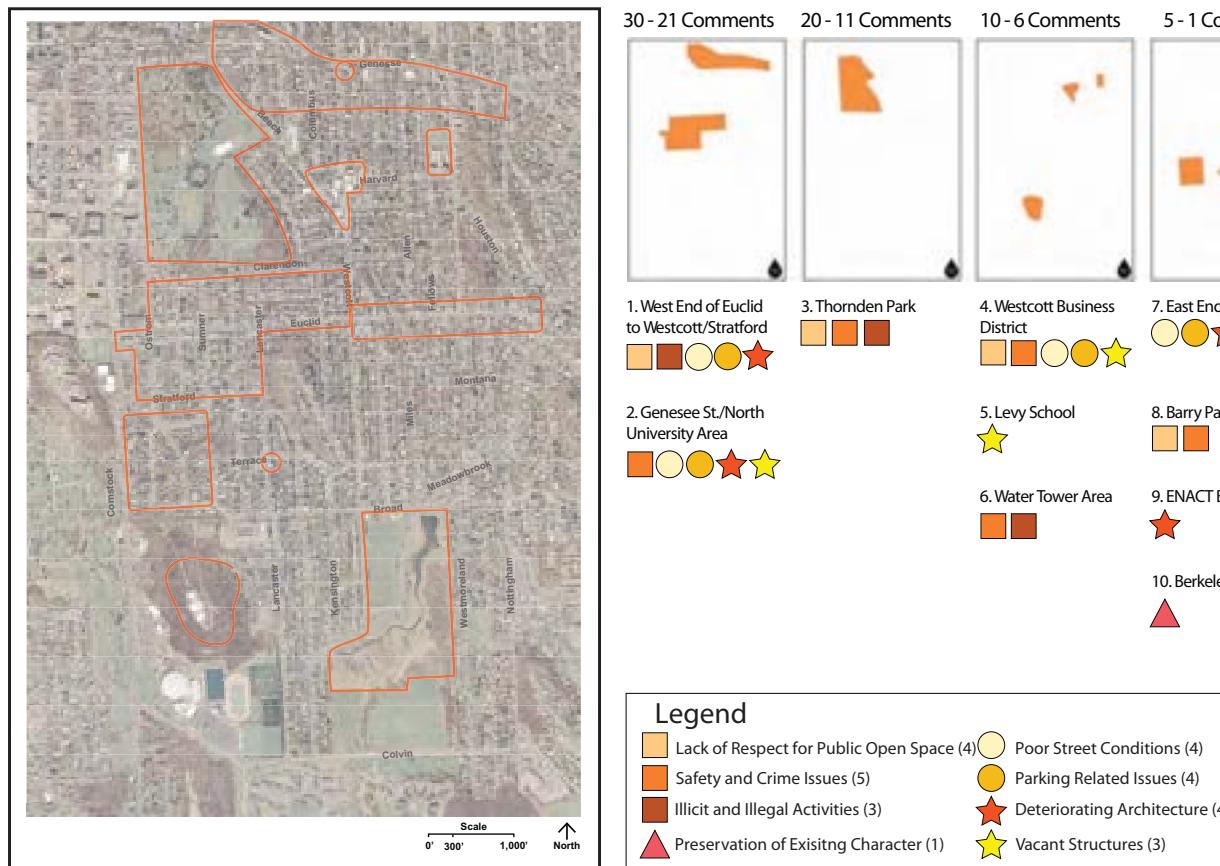
31 Members of the community voiced Thornden Park as a place of value.  
11 Community members voiced Thornden Park as a place of concern.

Thornden Park is valued as open space, an opportunity for recreation in the community, and for the aesthetically pleasing rose garden. Thornden Park has been voiced as a place of concern due to safety related issues especially at night.

### Values / Concerns Diagram



## Areas of Concern to Community



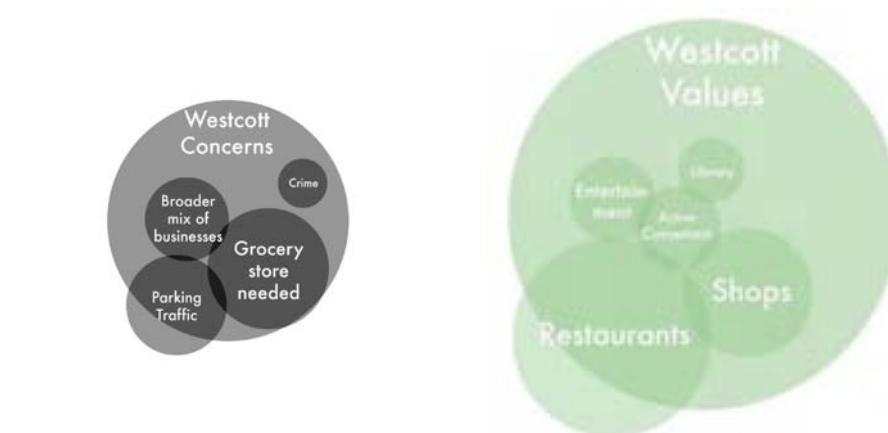
## Areas of Value and concern to Community - Westcott Business District

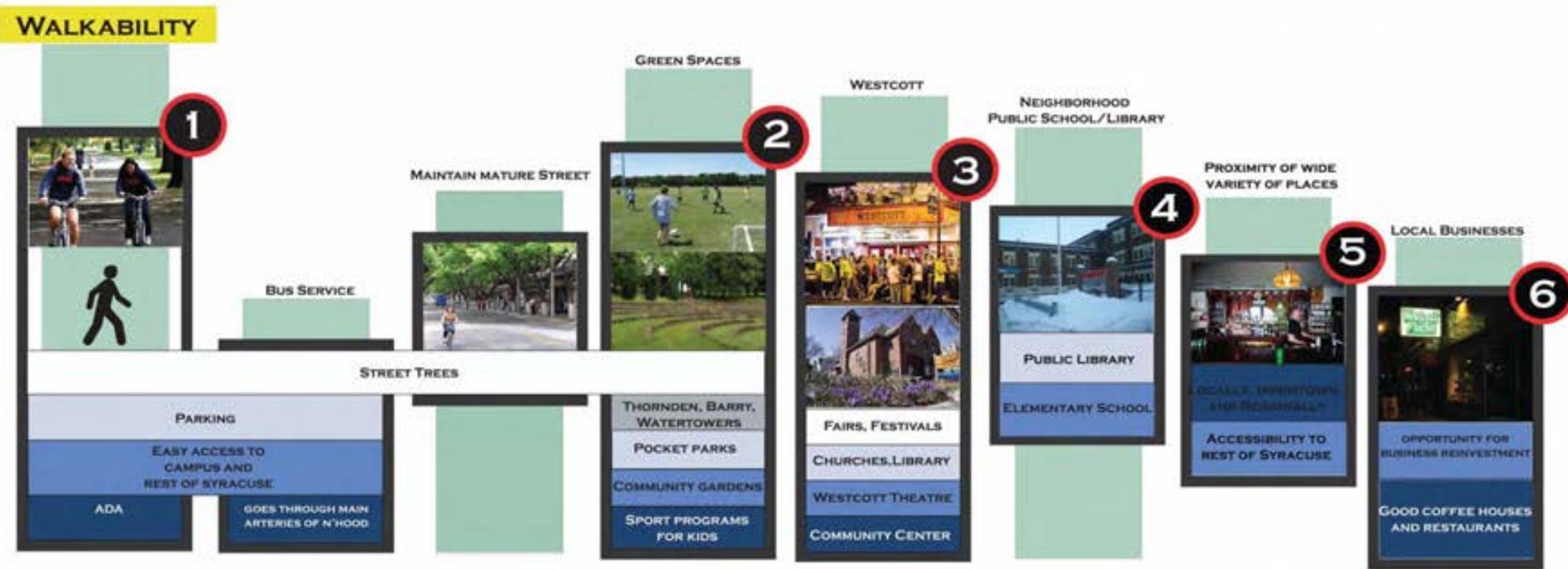


28 Members of the community voiced Westcott Business District as a place of value.  
9 Community members voiced Westcott Business District as a place of concern.

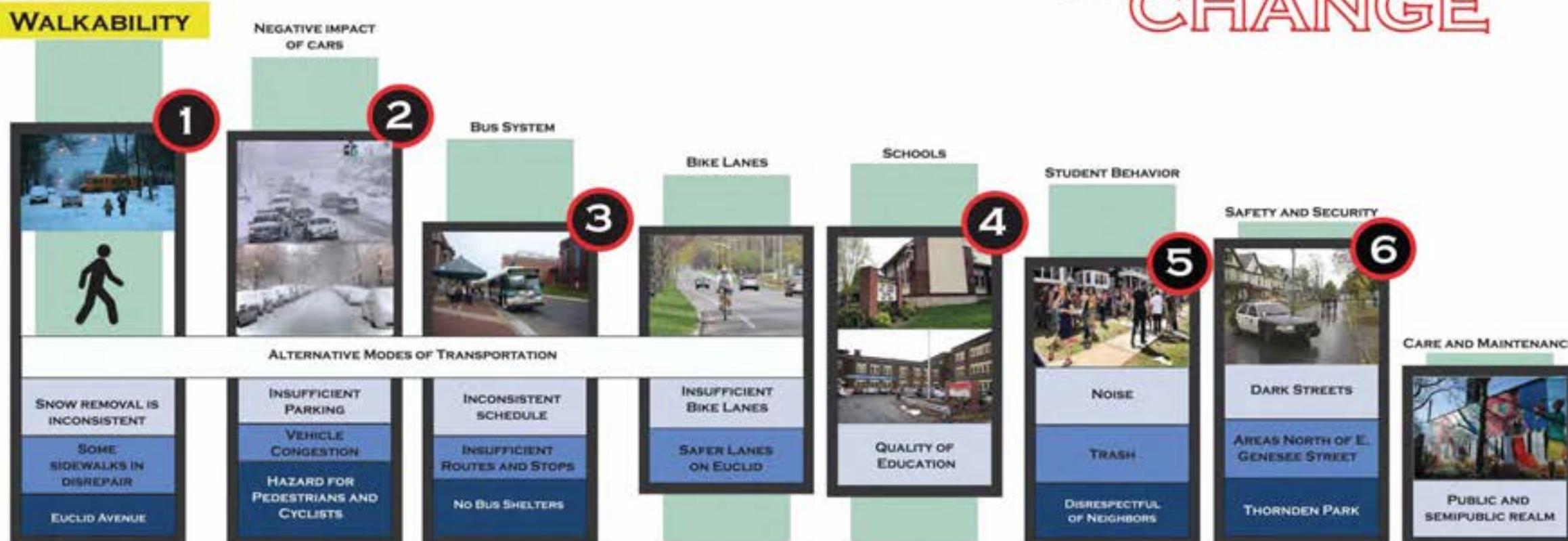
The Westcott Business District is valued for the close proximity within the community, abundance of local businesses, creator of community identity, and as a place of community gathering. The area has been voiced as a place of concern due to parking related issues and an increase of crime after dark.

### Values / Concerns Diagram





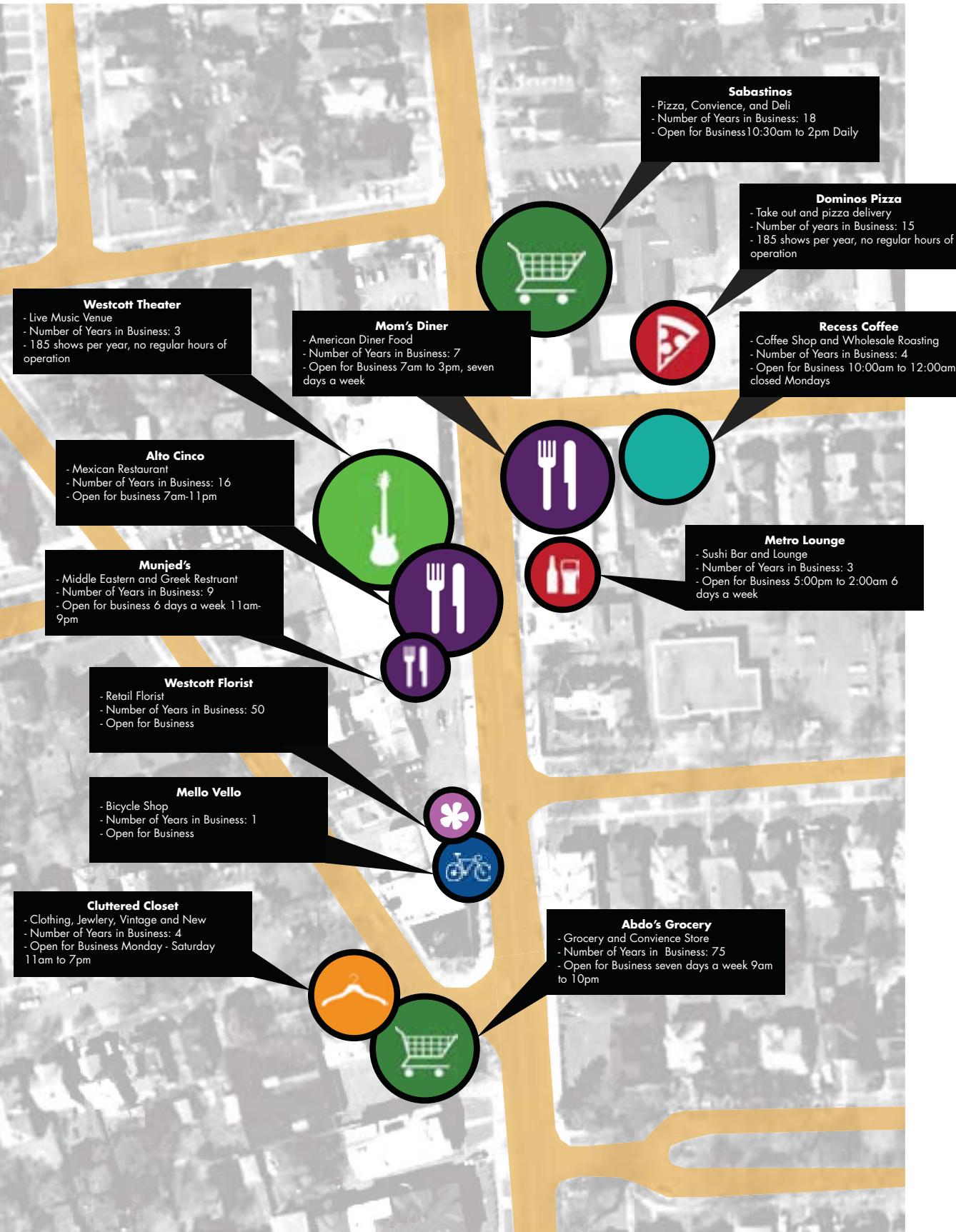
## NEIGHBORHOOD **KEEP** & **CHANGE**



University Neighborhood Housing Project				
Housing Characteristics Keep				
Major Theme	Color Coordination on how important the topic is to the people	Characteristic to Keep	Total # of Groups (9 max.)	Total # of Dots
Houses and Cherished Characteristics		Arch. Character & diversity, Integrity, details, well build struc. Historic, Traditional Character, Quality/ Craft of interior and exterior	9	36
Owner Occupants		A lot of owner occupied houses	7	24
Traditional Residential Neighborhood Design		Density of houses	6	9
Houses and Cherished Characteristics		Porches & variety of styles of them	5	8
Diverse Residents		Variety of residents: students, long term owners, young professionals	4	12
Diverse Residents		Diversity of housing options	4	9
Houses and Cherished Characteristics		Historic Homes	4	3
Affordability		Increasing housing values	3	2
Traditional Residential Neighborhood Design		Mix of single and double family homes	3	2
Good Quality of Property Maintenance		Quality of maintenance & investment	3	1
Affordability		Mix of housing types and cost	3	0
Good Quality of Property Maintenance		Quality of care, maintenance, investment	3	1
Good Quality of Property Maintenance		Responsible landlords and property owners	2	5
Good Quality of Property Maintenance		Sense of Property Ownership	2	5
Diverse Residents		Student residents	2	4
Affordability		Affordability for students and residents	2	4
Diverse Residents		Rental Opportunities	2	2
Yard Landscape		Traditional yards	2	1
Sense of Community		Sense of neighborhood, engagement with community, connections among neighbors	2	0

University Neighborhood Housing Project					
Housing Characteristics to Change					
Major Theme	Color Coordination on how important the topic is to the people	Characteristic to Change	What/How	Total # of Groups (9 max.)	Total # of Dots
Zoning and Enforcement		Change to better code enforcements; Lack of Proactive code enforcement; use code enforcement; reduce paperwork	How	5	16
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Property deterioration- rentals and owner occupied; deterioration of housing stock	What	5	13
Concentration Of Students		Expand Owner Occupancy, (in areas which are closets to campus to restore stability	How	5	10
Landlords and Care of Properties		Absentee landlords, Poor Management	What	4	17
Concentration Of Students		Prevent over concentration of students; restore balance between students and residents; relief of overcrowding close to campus; (homes were not built for rooming houses with 6 to 8 cars each	What	4	13
Sidewalks and Garbage		Garbage set outs- enforce ordinance; better trash management and noise violations	What/How	4	3
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Deteriorating Rental Properties- enforce housing codes vigorously	What/How	4	2
Parking		Student parking	What	4	0
Misc.		Regulate rental signs	How	3	4
Sidewalks and Garbage		Snow removal- enforce ordinance, especially with sidewalks	What/How	3	2
Parking		Loss of green yard space for parking; maintain backyards, protect from parking	What	3	2
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Poor quality of renovations- ugly fixes to beautiful houses (historically); ex. pressure treated porches and other inappropriate exterior work	What	3	0
Cost/Money Issue		Housing Pricing	What	3	0
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Abandoned Homes	What	2	4
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Removal of Porches- keep social space; repair deteriorating wood porches	What	2	3
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Restore Architectural features; retain architectural integrity; loss of architectural integrity	What	2	2
Condition and Appearance of Housing Stock		Poor quality and deferred maintenance	What	2	2
Concentration Of Students		More Options for student housing	How	2	0
Zoning and Enforcement		Too many rules and ordinances; too many strange housing ordinances	How	2	0
Landlords and Care of Properties		“Slum Lords”- greedy landlords	What	2	0
Landlords and Care of Properties		Parent Owner of student Apartments- too much turnover; need more stability	What	2	0
Misc.		Number of Parking per house	What	2	0

# Westcott Business Inventory



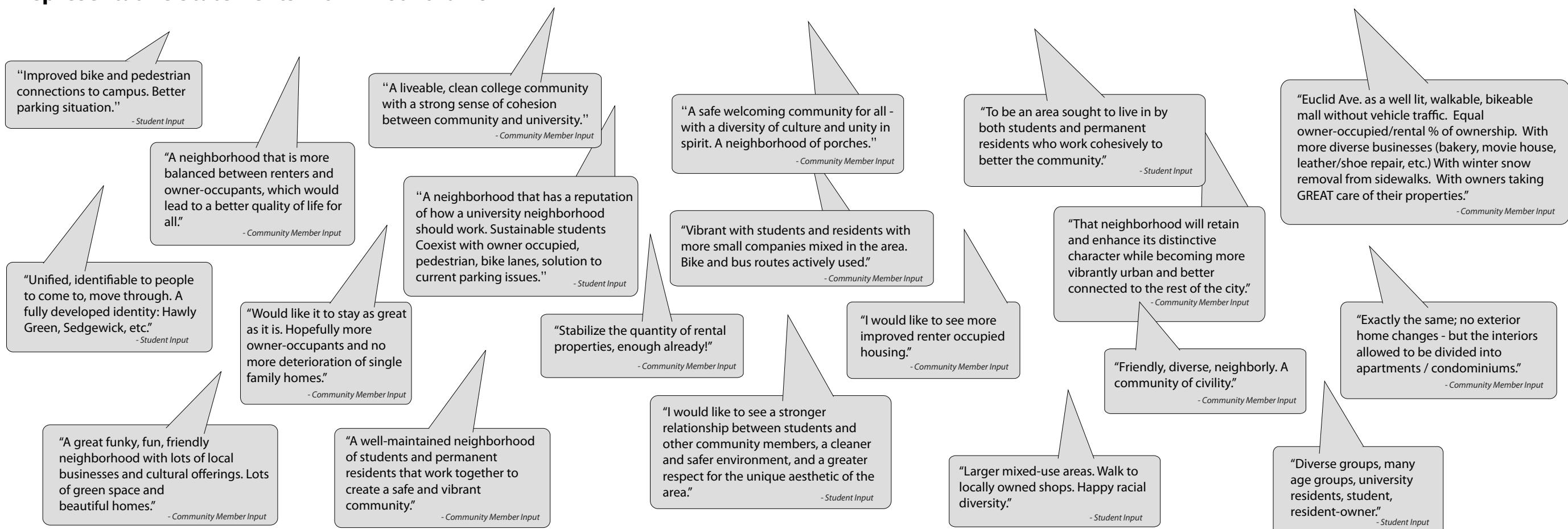
# Comments From Westcott Business Owners

Positive Pedestrian Environment	Positive Interactions	Positive Market	Lack of Respect for Public Space	Safety Related Issues	Factors of Safety	Actions to Increase Safety
6 total comments "Walk to work and walk" "Walk in business from Westcott" "Walk by and see sign for store on second floor" "Walking Community" "Foot traffic close to university" "Foot Traffic"	6 total comments "Know lots of people and people know you" "Clintele are nice as compared to other places in the city" "People will hold conversation, get along, and know other owners well" "Desired market within a mile or two of shop" "Good relationship with other business owners" "Strong support from locals, loyal customers"	4 total comments "Access to students" "Demographic supports business" "Neighborhood tolerant and supportive; bringing music and arts, warm atmosphere" "Good opportunity" "Closest bike shop to university" "Saw opportunity"	2 total comments "More outside people coming into business district" "Access to students" "Demographic supports business" "Desired market within a mile or two of shop" "Good relationship with other business owners" "Strong support from locals, loyal customers" "Closest bike shop to university" "Good opportunity"	4 total comments "Walk to work and walk" "Know lots of people and people know you" "Clintele are nice as compared to other places in the city" "People will hold conversation, get along, and know other owners well" "Desired market within a mile or two of shop" "Good relationship with other business owners" "Strong support from locals, loyal customers" "Closest bike shop to university" "Good opportunity"	4 total comments "Police station next door; presence in area" "Reputation of being unsafe, especially from people who live in suburbs" "Generally safe, crime used to be an issue in the late 1980's" "Police presence; especially on Friday and Saturday nights"	4 total comments "Police station next door; presence in area" "Reputation of being unsafe, especially from people who live in suburbs" "Generally safe, crime used to be an issue in the late 1980's" "Police presence; especially on Friday and Saturday nights"
7 total comments "Parking" "Parking can be difficult to find at night" "Perception that there is not enough parking" "Shared use parking lots are a challenge" "Have enough parking but people don't know" "Local meter maids should enforce meters" "Parking Friday and Saturday nights is a real challenge"	5 total comments "Good restaurants, music venue" "High concentration of music and arts" "Area businesses open late" "Diverse" "Do a lot of business with Co-ops, get supplies from them and sell them coffee"	5 total comments "Full service grocery" "Additional restaurants, other businesses that draw people" >New business owners" "Westcott known for diversity" "Loss of theater impacted business - before and after movies"	4 total comments "Customers diverse you see everything" "Westcott known for diversity" "A bit more diversity in shops" "Diverse Population - Age, ethnicity, professional to grad student to long term resident"	1 total comment "Increase good restaurants" "Diverse Neighborhood"	2 total comments "Meter people very attentive to giving tickets" "Local meter maids should enforce meters" "Parking is challenging to find, but do"	3 total comments "Perception that there is not enough parking" "Shared use parking lots are a challenge" "Have enough parking but people don't know" "Local meter maids should enforce meters" "Parking Friday and Saturday nights is a real challenge"
Positive Business Comments	Business Related Challenges	Business Related Improvements	Valued Diversity	Positive Parking Comments	Parking Related Issues	Pedestrian Environment Improvements
5 total comments "Good restaurants, music venue" "High concentration of music and arts" "Area businesses open late" "Diverse" "Do a lot of business with Co-ops, get supplies from them and sell them coffee"	5 total comments "Full service grocery" "Additional restaurants, other businesses that draw people" >New business owners" "Westcott known for diversity" "Loss of theater impacted business - before and after movies"	4 total comments "Customers diverse you see everything" "Westcott known for diversity" "A bit more diversity in shops" "Diverse Population - Age, ethnicity, professional to grad student to long term resident"	1 total comment "Increase good restaurants" "Diverse Neighborhood"	2 total comments "Meter people very attentive to giving tickets" "Local meter maids should enforce meters" "Parking is challenging to find, but do"	3 total comments "Perception that there is not enough parking" "Shared use parking lots are a challenge" "Have enough parking but people don't know" "Local meter maids should enforce meters" "Parking Friday and Saturday nights is a real challenge"	3 total comments "Perception that there is not enough parking" "Shared use parking lots are a challenge" "Have enough parking but people don't know" "Local meter maids should enforce meters" "Parking Friday and Saturday nights is a real challenge"

## Community Members Share Values, Concerns, and Ideas for the Future at First Community Forum



### Representative Statements From First Forums

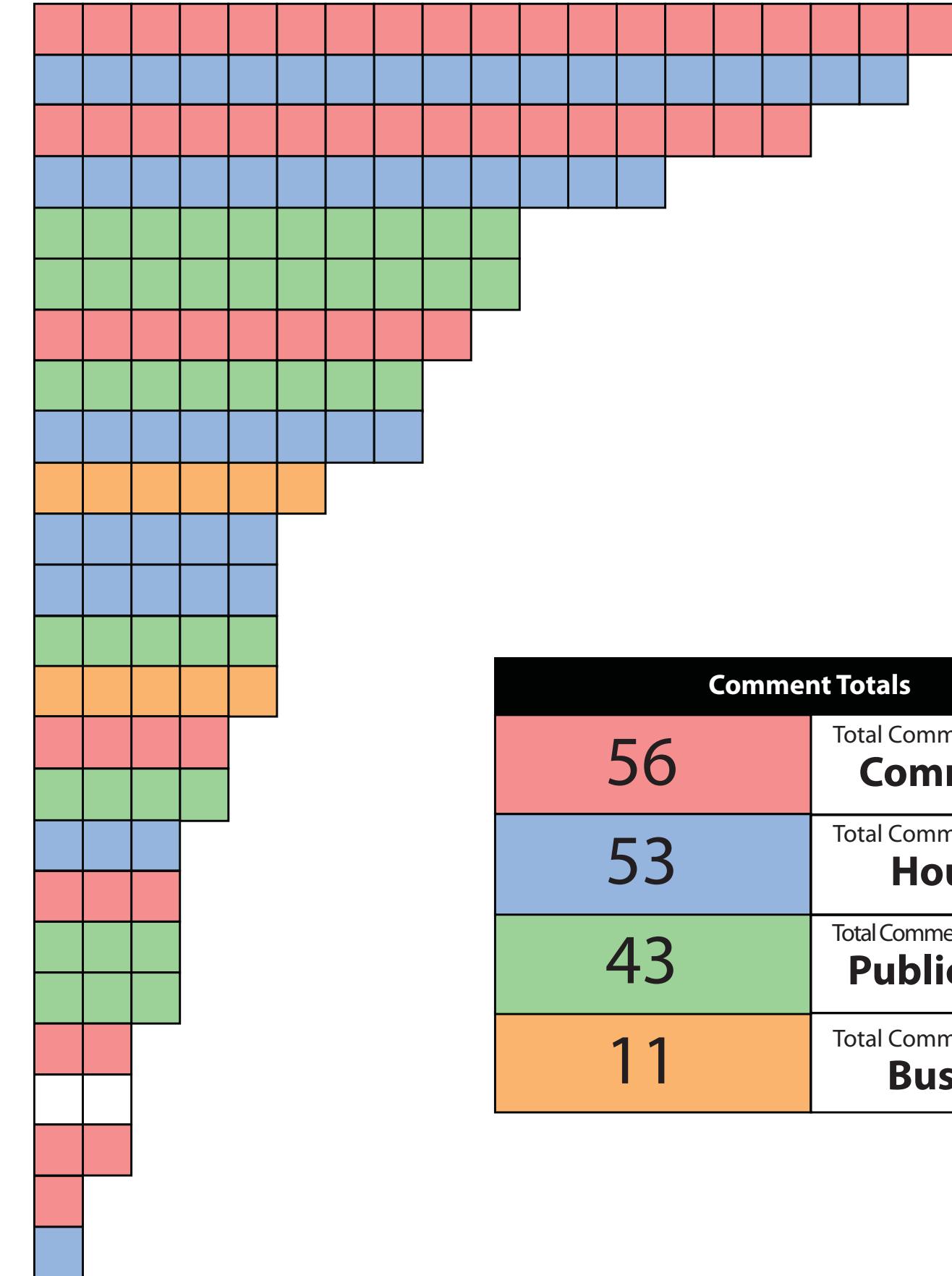


## Characteristic

## Number of Mentions

Active community, neighbors, neighborhood and student groups - better cooperation between groups and home	19
Stabilization / equilization and mixing of number of renters to owner-occupants, Diversity of residents	18
Diversity of cultures	16
Property owners (landlords and owner-occupants) keeping up appearance of houses	13
Safe and active bus and bike routes to other key parts of the city	10
Walkability - Better sidewalks and closer proximity of businesses to homes	10
Vibrant	9
Lovely / Beautiful Streetscapes, cleaner	8
Maintain historic building facades	8
Greater diversity of businesses - more variety of services and goods: specialty shops	6
Reasonable / affordable housing prices	5
More owner-occupants / single family homes	5
Maintain parkland / green space / more green space	5
Thriving Business District	5
Safer: crime-free	4
Better Parking: Less on-street parking	4
Diversity of housing types: architectural style, apartments/single family	3
Neighborhood identity is established and promoted by the city	3
Euclid as a no-traffic pedestrian mall	3
Consistent winter snow removal of sidewalks	3
More families	2
Already good - no change	2
Higher college grad retention	2
Better schools	1
More division inside existing houses for apartments	1

## Numerical Graph of Mentions



## Comment Totals

56	Total Comments related to <b>Community</b>
53	Total Comments related to <b>Housing</b>
43	Total Comments related to the <b>Public Realm</b>
11	Total Comments related to <b>Business</b>

# **University Neighborhood Housing Plan**

First stage Vision Process and Results

March 5, 2011



SUNY ESF Center for Community  
Design Research

## **Agenda for today's forum**

- Presentation of first stage results
- Choose activity sessions
- Activity session 1
- Activity session 2

## Purpose of the Housing Plan

- To create a plan, focusing on housing and quality of life, that will guides actions by the multiple stakeholders that contribute to or influence the neighborhood's quality of life – including residents, landlords, businesses, non-profit organizations, institutions and city departments

- Review the purpose of creating the housing plan
- Acknowledges that many individuals and organizations have a stake in the future of the neighborhood
- We are approaching it as a type of vision planning process

## What is vision planning and why is it important?

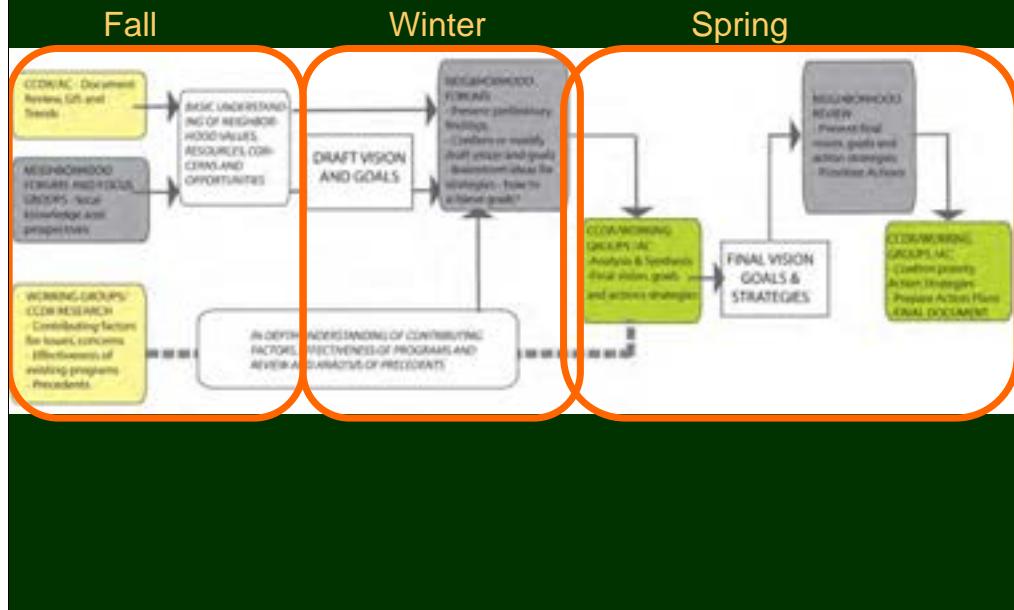


- An effective vision plan is based on an understanding of the resources, challenges and opportunities
- To the greatest extent possible it should reflect shared values and common goals.
- To reach that understanding the process invites broad participation, promotes respectful dialogue and open communication – it should be a community building process
- It is place specific and as practiced by the CCDR typically involves planning and design that situates the vision in the community
- Vision plans should result in implementable strategies that lead to action, which may include plans, programs or projects
- Process should build the collective community's ability to manage and direct appropriate change

## **How does a Vision Plan work?**

- Community creates a common vision for the future based on shared values
- Establish goals that will address concerns and build on resources
- Accomplish action strategies, short and long term

## Where are we in the process?



- Started the process in the late fall
- CCDR worked with an advisory committee to frame the process and
- Held first community forums in early December – did some additional outreach, focus groups and questionnaires to broaden participation

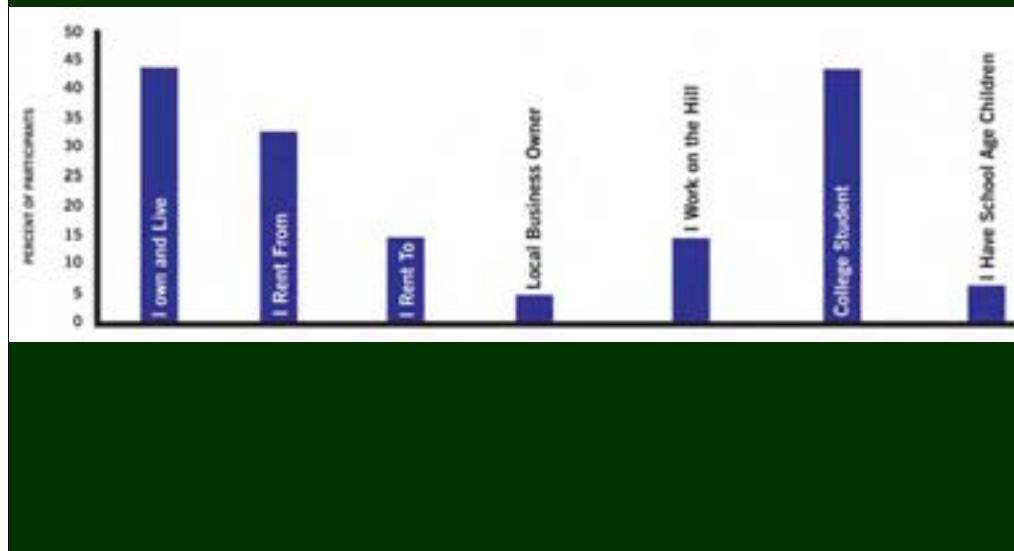
## How do we know the community so far?

- First neighborhood forums
- Student meetings
- College representatives
- Business survey
- Questionnaires
- Initial neighborhood impressions



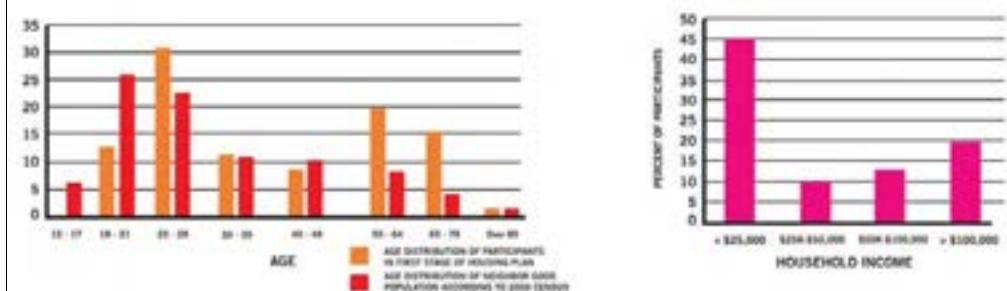
- About 90 residents and other stakeholders have participated to date through a variety of methods
- Trying to get broad representation

## Who has participated so far?



- Graph depicts characteristics of who has participated in the first stage
- Pretty good distribution of participants – especially the residents that own and live in the neighborhood and those that rent in the neighborhood.
- Low representation of people with school age children

## Who has participated so far?



- These graphs illustrate the income and age distribution of participants.
- Help us understand if we are getting representation of neighborhood and stakeholders
- Unfortunately, don't have 2010 census data yet
- Using 2000 data for age can see have pretty good representation in all groups except people under 21.
- Income data skewed by students – probably reporting individual income rather than household

## What keeps participants in the neighborhood?

- Location
- Community/local businesses
- Getting an education
- Personal relationships
- Work

Entry survey and questionnaire responses -

- Location – convenient city neighborhood – close to university and to downtown, easy to get places
- Sense of community and being part of neighborhood with land uses that support interesting quality of life
- Education – students are here because of SU, ESF and other educational institutions
- Personal relationships – close neighbors, family, college friends
- Work – related to location – but specific mention

## STRENGTHS of the neighborhood

- Diversity of residents
  - Location
- Community - local businesses
  - Neighborhood culture
    - Architecture
  - Public transportation

Also on entry survey we asked about strengths of the neighborhood

Strengths are characteristics that you want to build on – use to your advantage

In relative order of times mentioned

## Challenges of the Neighborhood

- Cost / value of housing
- Transient residents
  - Safety, crime
- Maintenance of sidewalks
- Maintenance of private property
  - Parking and traffic
  - Communication

Challenges are problems or concerns that you think need to be addressed or resolved in some way

## Composite

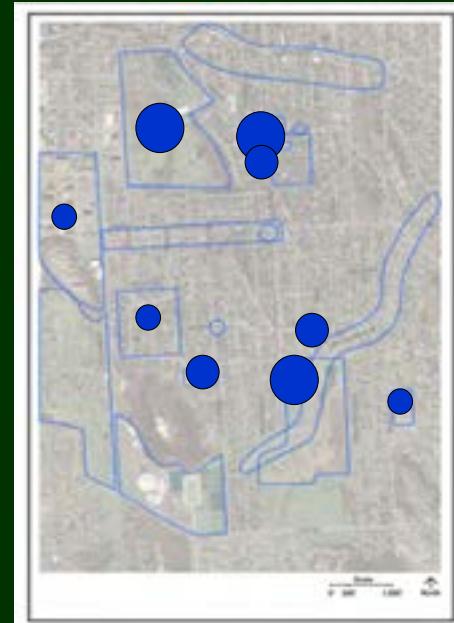
CATEGORY OF INTEREST	KEEPS ME IN N.HOOD	STRENGTH	CHALLENGE
DIVERSITY OF RESIDENTS / PEOPLE	●	●	●
LOCATION	●	●	
COMMUNITY / LOCAL BUSINESSES	●	●	
HOUSING	●		●
TRANSIENT RESIDENCES			●
SAFETY			●
PUBLIC SIDEWALKS & PUBLIC SPACE			●
CULTURE		●	
ZONING ENFORCEMENT & PRIVATE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE			●
PARKING & TRAFFIC			●
EDUCATION / STUDENT	●		
COMMUNICATION			●
ARCHITECTURE		●	
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION		●	
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS	●		
WORK	●		

Poster illustrates the relationship between responses

See that what keeps people in the neighborhood in several areas corresponds with the identified strengths

And at least in one case, that of diversity, a strength is also a challenge

## Valued Areas



- Close proximity
- Recreation
- Community identity
- Gathering space
- Aesthetic
- Local business
- Architecture
- Economic generator
- Local business

- Areas of value to the community are typically those that you want to retain and improve.
- Click - Those that received highest mention are Thornden Park, Barry Park and Westcott Business District
- Click - Then Westcott community center, Real food coop and Ed smith School
- Click – then Berkeley Park, Syracuse University and Nottingham Plaza – and then others
- Lots of different ways to consider this data
- Important to understand the reasons why places are highly valued
- Lot of different reasons why places have value – not just economic
- What contributes to quality of life, sense of place?
- Responses coded and listed in order of number of times mentioned
- Mentioned most frequently for multiple places –
  - proximity, lots of valued places within
  - Recreation space
  - Contributes to community identity

## Areas of Concern



- Safety and crime issues
- Deteriorating architecture
- Parking related issues
- Poor street conditions
- Lack of respect for public space
- Illegal & illicit activities
- Vacant structures
- Preservation of valued character

- The areas of concern are those that you have identified as having problems or issues that trouble you.
- In most if not all cases these are places that you care about and would like to address or improve the characteristics or activities that you have identified as problematic.
- These impact the quality of life in the neighborhood and its desirability as a place to live for people who have a choice.
- Places of highest mention are the
  - Click - east end of Euclid, the northern part of the neighborhood near East Genesee Street and
  - Click - Then Thornden Park
  - Click - And the Westcott Street Business district, Levy School and the Water Tower area
- As with Valued areas, the reasons you have given as why certain places are areas of concern are listed in order of times mentioned

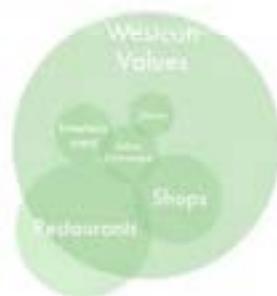
## Areas of Value and of Concern



28 Members of the community voiced Westcott Business District as a place of value.  
9 Community members voiced Westcott Business District as a place of concern.

The Westcott Business District is valued for the close proximity within the community, abundance of local businesses, creator of community identity, and as a place of community gathering. The area has been voiced as a place of concern due to parking related issues and an increase of crime after dark.

Values / Concerns Diagram



- Invariably there are places in every community that are highly valued places, but also places of concern.
- We might look at these as priority areas – to address or resolve the concerns so that they retain their highly valued status and positive contribution to the neighborhood.
- Showing Westcott business district
- Thornden Park also identified

• QUESTIONS so far

## Housing and Neighborhood – Keep and Change



- One of the other major activities that we did was a brainstorm of characteristics in the housing and the neighborhood that people wanted to keep and those that they wanted to change.
- After writing ideas on worksheets, participants at the forums shared their ideas. They then prioritized those aspects or characteristics using dots.
- We sorted those responses and priorities and the results are shown on two separate posters



- This is the poster for Housing Characteristics to Keep and change
- Prioritized by the number of groups at the first forum that mentioned the specific characteristics –
- And each characteristic fit into a major theme

## Housing Characteristics to KEEP

- Houses and their cherished characteristics
  - Architectural character, style and diversity
  - Porches
  - Historic homes



- Let's first review the housing characteristics to keep.
- Pretty much everyone agreed that the housing stock is important to retain and maintain – we have categorized these comments into a category named Houses and their cherished characteristics
- Architectural character, style, diversity, details, well built were the characteristics that just about everyone thought were important to keep
- About half of the groups specifically mentioned porches and historic homes

## Housing Characteristics to KEEP

- Owner Occupants
- Diverse residents
  - Variety of residents; students; long term owners; young professionals
  - Diversity of housing options
  - Student residents
  - Rental opportunities
- High quality maintenance
- Affordability

- More than half the groups specifically mentioned and prioritized owner occupants as a characteristic to keep
- And more than half listed and prioritized the desire to keep a diversity of residents, with specific mention of a diversity of housing options

## Housing Characteristics to CHANGE

- Condition and appearance of housing stock
  - Property deterioration (owner occupied and rental)
  - Poor quality renovations
  - Abandoned homes
  - Removal of porches
  - Poor quality and deferred maintenance

- Let's move on to Housing characteristics to Change
- The one characteristic that seemed to have support by just about everyone that participated in the first stage was property deterioration, whether they were owner occupied or rental/investment properties.
- While everyone seemed to be concerned about this how they described the problem or reason varied
- Note – go back to poster – highest ranking was code enforcement – this actually is an action strategy to address the identified problems and requires further investigation to de

## Housing Characteristics to CHANGE

- Concentration of student renters
  - Expand owner occupancy, restore stability close to campus
  - Restore balance
  - Relieve overcrowding
- Landlords and care of property
  - Absentee landlords, poor management
  - Sapping value without reinvestment
  - Turnover in parent owner properties

- Concentration of student renters was a concern noted by about half of the groups – with several reasons noted, or approaches described (why versus how)
- The same for landlords that do not take good care of their properties

## Characteristics of Housing to CHANGE

- Sidewalks and garbage
- Parking
- Housing pricing

- Some characteristics were related to people living in the neighborhood but were not specifically about the housing.
- Sidewalks and garbage issues
- Parking especially in high density student areas and parking congestion – more of a focus in the neighborhood change activity
- The desire to change Housing pricing was expressed by several groups – related to the fact that housing prices are higher than other areas of the city, and inflated due to demand by students renters



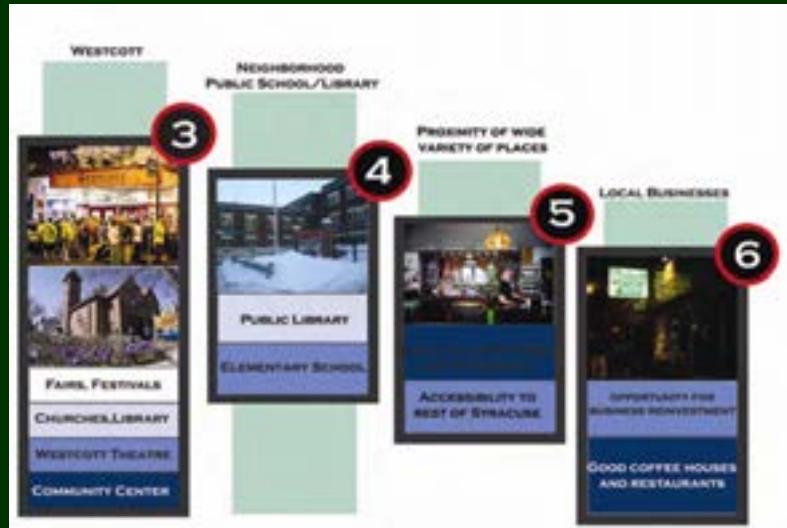
- We used a similar process to prioritize aspects and characteristics of the general neighborhood that people wanted to Keep and those they wanted to change.
- So again, you want to Keep and build on your strengths, and change and improve the problems or issues.

## Characteristics of Neighborhood to KEEP



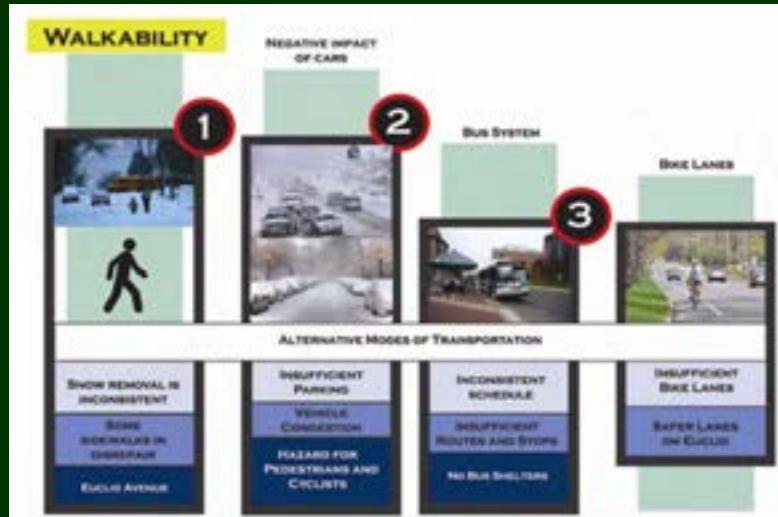
- Residents appreciate the ease of walking in the neighborhood, including that there are destinations within walking distance, such as parks and the business district
- Related to this as shown on the poster is the desire to maintain a good bus system
- And the environment to support a good pedestrian experience, which includes street trees.
- Participants identified the parks and open space resources as important neighborhood resources

## Characteristics of Neighborhood to KEEP



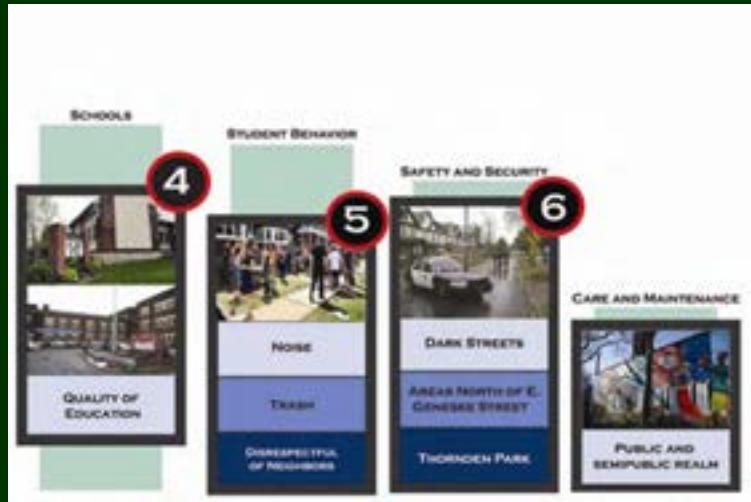
- Other aspects people wanted to keep
  - Westcott street area, noted for its fairs and festivals, the Westcott theatre and the community center
  - The library and the elementary school
  - The proximity of the neighborhood to many places
  - And local businesses which provide opportunities for business investment, and which include good coffee places and restaurants
  - Again, these are things that contribute to the desirability of the neighborhood as a great place to live.

## Characteristics of Neighborhood to CHANGE



- Conversely there are a number of characteristics related to the neighborhood that people want to change.
- Interestingly, the number one characteristic to change is the neighborhood's walkability or support of walking – community member noted inconsistent snow removal, disrepair of some sidewalks and the desire to improve the walkability of Euclid as a major route in the neighborhood.
- Related to walkability is the desire to change the negative impact of cars, including insufficient parking. Vehicle congestion and hazards for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Changes to improve the bus system through the neighborhood – inconsistent schedule, insufficient routes and stops and a desire for more bus shelters
- Our analysis of this points towards a desire for improving alternative modes of transportation to reduce reliance and need for cars.

## Characteristics of neighborhood to CHANGE



- About a third of the groups expressed concern about the quality of public schools in the city. Community members recognize the importance and value of public education and its influence on families with children
- A third of the groups also wanted a change in student resident behavior and cited issues of noise, trash and disrespect of neighbors
- Also mentioned, but not listed as a high priority were safety and security; and care and maintenance of the public and semi public landscape

## **Vision activity – How do you want to be able to describe the neighborhood in 10 years?**

- Stabilization/balance/equalization of renters to owner occupants
- Diversity of residents
- Active community with better cooperation
- High standard of care for properties
- Walkable neighborhood
- Safe and active bike and bus routes
- Thriving business district
- Integrity of architectural features

- Final activity in forum 1 was for participants to write how they want to be able to describe the neighborhood in 10 years.
- These were also documented and themes or ideas drawn from them.
- The process and results are shown on a poster. These give a sense of the big ideas that are important to those that participated
- Also need to be synthesized with other data to develop a draft vision statement

## Synthesis – Areas of Agreement

- **Strengths-Resources-Highly Valued – What you want to Keep**
  - Houses – the style, age and details
  - Diversity of residents
  - Location, and proximity to university and other areas
  - Community resources – parks and business district
  - Walkability

- We look across all of the activity responses and synthesized these into priorities around which there seems to be agreement.
- For the strengths, and resources – the things you want to keep and build on:

## **Synthesis – Areas of Agreement**

- **Concerns – Challenges – What you want to Change and improve**
  - Declining condition and appearance of some houses
  - Poor care of some property
  - Parking and congestion
  - Poor communication
  - Safety/security

•For the concerns and challenges, what you want to change and improve:

## **Synthesis: Ideas for what the GOALS will address**

- The traditional physical characteristics of the houses and the neighborhood
- Diversity and housing choices
- Care and stewardship
- Reduced reliance on cars – alternative transportation and circulation
- Neighborhood resources – e.g. Westcott Street Business District and the parks
- Public education and life-long learning

- Based on the synthesis of the first stage results and the areas of agreement, we have developed broad categories for what we think should be the major goals within the housing plan.
- These recognize that you need to build on your strengths and address the problems – and in many cases these occur around the same topic
- For the remainder of the forum we would like to have you explore some of these topics in more detail to confirm the issues and start to think about strategies to address the concerns that most participants seem to agree on
- Before we move on, there are a couple of topics that will require more study and dialogue

## Synthesis - Contradictions

- **Cost and value of housing** – keeping affordability versus rising house prices due to market forces
- **Diversity** – appreciate diversity but sometimes it can be a challenge

- There are several areas of contradiction that you are probably aware of but must come to grips with
  - Cost and value of houses and housing in the neighborhood
    - Still working on research on the trends of house sale prices and rental prices, and comparison to other parts of the city – but there seems to be a struggle between keeping the neighborhood affordable for people who want to live here and rising house sale prices due to purchase as investment properties
  - Another contradiction is the concept of diversity – most people seem to value it but there is also acknowledgement that diversity sometimes brings different lifestyles and hours of activity.

## Synthesis - Areas of divergence

- Is it desirable and/or possible to maintain or achieve a “balance” (or some other ratio) of owner occupied and rental/student rental properties?
- Is it desirable and/or possible to alleviate the concentration of students in the western portion of the neighborhood?

- While our focus today is on understanding shared values, there are a few issues around which there seem to be disagreement or different views – these are not new to you.
- I am not expecting that these will be easily resolved but I also don't want to ignore them in the discussion of results.
  - The first has to do with owner-occupied property and renter occupied properties - Is there a balance or some other ratio that is desired in the neighborhood?
  - Another - Is it desirable to continue to have a concentration of students in the western portion of the neighborhood? If it is not desirable, could it be changed?
- There are no easy answers to these questions
- Our activities today may shed some light on these issues but We may need to come back to these at the next forum

## **Ideas for what the GOALS will address:**

- The traditional physical characteristics of the houses and the neighborhood
- Diversity and housing choices
- Care and stewardship
- Reduced reliance on cars – alternative transportation and circulation
- Neighborhood resources – e.g. Westcott Street Business District and the parks
- Public education and life-long learning

- At this forum we want to focus on getting a better understanding of the areas around which there seem to be general agreement and developing possible action strategies.
- Do you have questions?

## **Two Activity Sessions to explore goal topics in more depth**

- There are five different topic areas
- You should select two of interest to you
- Sign up for one in activity period one
- Sign up for a second in activity period two
- We would like to have fairly even distribution if possible
- Each activity session will last 35 minutes

- At the end of the forum, please fill out the short survey and evaluation form
- Thanks for taking the time to be here today

## Appendix 2 - Second Stage Process and Results

Second Stage Process and Results

Workshop Results Posters

Second Stage Presentation

Student Design and Research Posters

## Appendix 2: Second Stage Process and Results

The second stage focused on exploring in more depth with the stakeholders and the Advisory Committee the issues and concerns that they had identified, with the intent of better understanding them, why they had occurred and exploring some possible approaches to addressing them. This was accomplished through questions asked of stakeholders as well as additional research by the project team. The research questions focused on the primary themes from the first stage, including the following:

- What are the valued characteristics of the houses in the neighborhood and why are they important?
- What does diversity mean in this neighborhood, and what type of housing opportunities will support the needs of a diverse population?
- What are the basic expectations for the care and maintenance of public and private property in the neighborhood?
- How can the neighborhood become more oriented toward walking, bicycling and mass transportation, with less reliance on using personal cars?
- Why is the parking demand so great in the neighborhood and how can that be alleviated?
- How can the neighborhood resources act to better support quality of life in the neighborhood?

### Second Neighborhood Forum

The project team facilitated five hands-on activities with approximately 35 neighborhood residents and other stakeholders at the second forum on Saturday, March 5, 2011. Posters documenting the results of the second forum are included at the end of this section

1. Exploring Care and Maintenance –The desire to promote a culture of care and maintenance was one of the major themes that emerged during the first stage of the project. Although there are a variety of reasons given for problems of poor or unacceptable care and maintenance and respect for property, this topic is one of the greatest concerns of those that took part in the neighborhood forums. Through the steps of this activity, participants brainstormed the problems, possible solutions and basic expectations for residential properties, sidewalks and streets.

- It is clear from the results of this activity that care and maintenance is a shared responsibility, relying on and contributing to a pride of place and a sense of ownership. The action strategies addressed both regulatory approaches such as strengthening enforcement of existing codes as well as cooperative approaches such as providing guidance and assistance to property owners or residents that lack the skills or financial resources.

2. Defining Valued House Characteristics – Just about everyone involved in the first stage believes that the housing stock in the neighborhood, most of which was built in the first half of the 20th century, possesses characteristics that individually and as a collection are assets of the neighborhood that should not be lost. The purpose of this activity was to gain a better understanding of the elements that contribute to this image by having stakeholders identify those physical characteristics using photos of existing homes, and describe why they feel they are important.

- The results reinforced the value of front porches and their meaning as social spaces and visual cues of neighborliness. The front yard and landscape setting of the houses were also noted, with trimmed shrubs located as foundation planting as a desirable characteristic. Participants agreed that the homes in the neighborhood represent a period of urban residential history that should be acknowledged and celebrated. Homes possess architectural details that are in danger of being lost to insensitive renovations.
- Action strategies focused on education and providing information as ways to help property owners to see the value of these characteristics, and providing resources or incentives to encourage the retention or improvement of these important characteristics.

3. Housing Choices that Promote Diversity – Diversity is a highly valued characteristic of the University/Westcott neighborhood. The purpose of this activity was to explore what diversity in this neighborhood means and

how that might be supported or reinforced through housing choices. Represented at the forum were landlords, students, couples (including empty nesters), families and older professionals; not represented were elderly, young working people, or low income residents. Through this activity participants described the desired characteristics of housing that they would like at their current stage of life, and what they anticipated to be their next stage of life.

- Desired characteristics common to all groups included general quality of life improvements to support walking, greater diversity of local businesses and better bus service. From a housing perspective, participants generally wanted a usable yard, off-street parking, a clean house and area, a safe area and a mix of housing types available. Landlords desired the ability to provide one and two bedroom units because they appeal to multiple groups of renters. Larger residences with three or more bedrooms appeal to families or groups of renters looking to save on rent. Current owner occupants want to increase the number of owner occupied homes and want to “age in place” with options for retirement age housing.
- Only a few action strategies emerged from this activity, including the conversion of large buildings to condominiums or multiple unit dwellings, and the concept of maintaining and restoring the exterior architecture of houses while renovating the interior to provide desired unit sizes and features.

4. Movement and circulation – Encouraging alternative modes of transportation including walking, bicycling and buses, to reduce vehicular traffic and parking related issues in the neighborhood emerged as a primary goal. The workshop activities associated with this theme sought to better understand existing modes of transportation used to move around the neighborhood and why they were used; the characteristics and practices that encouraged or discouraged the use of alternative modes; and what improvements that might encourage use.

• The reasons people walk can be broadly divided into two categories: first as a form of transportation, and second as a form of recreation, exercise or socialization (although they sometimes choose to do the first, to also accomplish the second). Participants tend to walk to destinations if it is convenient and relatively close, and walk in general when the weather is good; conversely they drive to destinations in inclement weather, when pressed for time, have things they need to carry, and/or feel the distance is too great to walk.

- Walking can be encouraged through well maintained sidewalks, a pedestrian friendly environment (safe, detailed, continuous route, accessible, separated from cars) with places for socializing. Action strategies included pursuing a neighborhood wide snow removal strategy.

- Just a couple of participants said they ride bikes to get around the neighborhood for exercise and if they have time available.

- Bicycling could be encouraged through provision of bike lanes and the other necessities that create a safe and convenient environment for the use of bicycles, such as bike racks and clear, noticeable signage.

- No one at the workshop said they took the bus and reasons why were not questioned. They desired affordable rates, greater frequency of buses and logical convenient routes.

- Action strategies included posting bus schedules, creating access to buses that does not hinder traffic flow and studying change to the routes and schedules for reliability and convenience.

- Euclid Avenue and Westcott Street were again identified as major circulation routes in the neighborhood

5. Westcott Business District as a Neighborhood Resource – The Westcott Business District was identified as both highly valued and an area of concern. The purpose of the activities was to delve deeper into participants experience and perception of the business district through documenting patterns of existing use, areas of concern and desired businesses.

- The three most active places of those that participated in the workshop were restaurants Alto Cinco and Mom's Diner, and the Petit Library. The district is characterized as a social meeting place; a place to get basic services, living needs and entertainment; it is used by local people; its small scale and intimate characteristics are desired; there is desire for connectivity and design unity, convenient parking and more variety in the businesses.

Suggested businesses include a grocery story, pharmacy and hardware store.

- Underutilized and concern areas included unattractive parking lots located in front of properties, and land uses that were not contributing to activity and vitality of the business.
- Action strategies included studies to understand the market, complete streets and green infrastructure concepts, parking and a business improvement district.

### **Third Neighborhood Forum**

A third neighborhood forum was held on Saturday, May 7, 2011 and was attended by about 25 community members. The purpose of the forum was to review the results of the second forum and to review and comment on design studies prepared by SUNY ESF landscape architecture students in the Spring 2011 Community Design studio.

#### **Student Design Studies**

The students in the Community Design studio had been working on the University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan since early February, documenting and analyzing workshop data, preparing summary posters, developing research questions and designing workshop activities. Their involvement provided the opportunity for additional research and investigation into some of the issues and questions that have emerged during this planning process.

Their studies were based on the goal categories, areas of concern and opportunity identified by community members, and the student's specific interests. These studies were conceptual in nature. They should not be perceived as specific recommendations but rather as ideas around which you can have discussion to better understand preferences, concerns and priorities.

The studies were categorized into three main topic areas, outlined as follows.

#### **1. Image and Identity Studies**

It is obvious that the University neighborhood has some unique and very special characteristics and places that are highly valued by the people who know the neighborhood well. These are a source of pride and contribute to the strong sense of community. It is important to celebrate and communicate these characteristics to new or prospective residents and visitors. In new residents the intent is to promote a sense of belonging and a desire to be part of taking care of the neighborhood.

Three students undertook design studies that explored how to define and reinforce places and characteristics that contribute to the neighborhood's identity.

After establishing a basic diagram of cherished places, connections, nodes and gateways, Aida Hernandez Balzac and David Myers each developed a process to analyze gateways and nodes to understand their characteristics and determine the role that they could play in reinforcing neighborhood identity. They then prepared some sketch design ideas based on those findings.

Stephen Mruk was interested in how the existing parks could play a more important role as neighborhood assets, making the houses around them very desirable places to live. He chose to focus on Thornden Park. He analyzed existing access, connections and relationships to the surrounding residential areas. His design interventions focus on the Ackerman Street entrance.

#### **2. Movement and Circulation Studies**

Issues related to movement and circulation came up repeatedly during the planning process. A number of people expressed concern about the density of parking in the Euclid corridor between Comstock and Westcott. Sarah Moore developed a methodology to quantify the supply and demand for parking in that area. She proposed a series of ideas to alleviate the competition for parking by non-residents.

One of the draft goals expressed the desire to reduce the reliance on cars – one way to do this is to encourage more walking and bicycling in and through the neighborhood. The Euclid corridor was identified as the major transportation route in the neighborhood, and as an area of opportunity and concern. Adam Olinsky and Fatimah Hamid analyzed the corridor, its current conditions and the multiple roles it plays in the neighborhood. Their design studies suggested several alternative approaches to making Euclid a “complete street” which balances walking, biking and motorized vehicles.

Westcott Street was also identified as a place where pedestrians should be privileged and encouraged. James Burt focused his study within the business district, developing two alternatives to calm vehicular traffic and improve the pedestrian experience. (The graphic of this design study is not included in this document.)

### 3. Housing Related Studies

Two students chose to do research in topics related to housing. Tim Devlin investigated the area of Euclid just east of the Comstock. His study was an inventory of existing conditions analyzed through the lens of the characteristics that neighborhood residents have identified as desired or valued. He had several suggestions for actions that could mitigate or improve areas of concern and take advantage of opportunities that currently exist.

Bobby Brittain worked on the documentation and analysis of ownership trends in the neighborhood over the past 15 or so years. His analysis centered on the changes that have occurred and identification of areas that have undergone different degrees of change. He continued to work on the project as an intern in the summer of 2011, refining and expanding his analysis of ownership trends. This more in-depth work is represented in Appendix 3.

## Problem & Solution Activity

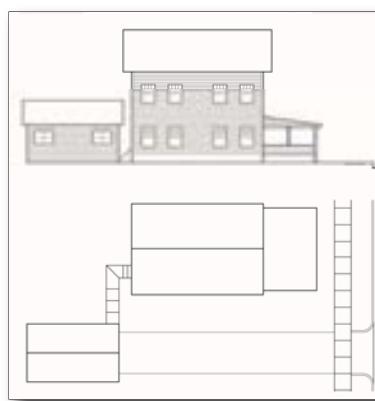
In this activity, we asked participants to identify some of the problems within the neighborhood concerning care and maintenance. Participants were also asked to identify the party responsible for this problem, why the problem was happening, and what some possible solutions to the problem may be. Then we discussed the responses in a group setting and compiled the answers on a large flip chart sheet.

MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS ACTIVITY SHEET			
PROBLEM	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?	WHAT ARE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS?

Problem & Solution Activity Chart

## Expectations Activity

In this activity we asked participants to describe their expectations for basic care and maintenance in the neighborhood. Community members worked in groups of 2 or 3 to identify the basic signs of care and maintenance on a drawing similar to the one below. Four identical plan views and two elevations were provided and participants were encouraged to consider the requirements of the four seasons.



Expectations Activity Diagram

## Problem & Solution Activity Results

The following chart shows a summary of the results that we gathered from the second forum activities.

### What are the Problems?

Poorly Maintained Houses	Inconsistent Snow Removal	Poorly Maintained Sidewalks	Garbage and Debris	Problematic Parking	Poorly Maintained Yards	Poorly Maintained Right-of-Ways	Drainage Problems*
Peeling paint Unsound structures Damaged roofs	Snowy and icy sidewalks, streets and driveways	Cracked and uneven surfaces	Litter Spilled trash cans Dog dippings	On-street overcrowding Improper parking blocks streets and driveways	Unmowed lawns Dead grass or plants Overgrown plants	Dead grass Damaged or overgrown street trees	Large Puddles Mud Erosion
Property Owner	Property Owner Renter	Property Owner	Property Owner Renter Passers-By	Drivers	Property Owner	City	Property Owner City
Apathy Absentee landlords General apathy No vested interest from short term renters	Lack of Enforcement Physical Inability Apathy Absentee landlords General apathy	Apathy Expense Lack of Enforcement Lack of Awareness Unsure of who is responsible	Apathy Expense Lack of Enforcement Lack of Awareness Inadequate Receptacles	Insufficient Off-Street Parking Abundance of Multi-room Rentals Commuters Park in Neighborhood	Apathy Absentee landlords General apathy No vested interest from short term renters	Not a Priority Expense	Poorly Graded Property Damaged Gutters Clogged Drains Too Much Foot-traffic on Wet Ground
Physical Inability Expense Lack of Knowledge Lack of Enforcement	Expense Lack of Awareness Unsure of who clears snow						
Advertise existing programs that help home owners repair property	City removes snow from sidewalks and charges property owners a tax	Enforce existing codes	Enforce existing codes	Require landlords to provide enough off-street spaces for all renters	Establish a neighborhood volunteer group to help perform or teach yard work.	Implement a volunteer or educational program for arborist students	Provide guidelines and instruction for proper grading and appropriate repairs
Implement neighborhood cooperative program	Neighborhood group removes snow and charges property owner a fee (could be subsidized)	Require that houses not transfer ownership before repairs are made	Provide standard issue garbage cans	Provide more information explaining rules and consequences	Provide guidelines and instruction for care and maintenance	Encourage city to make it a priority	Encourage residents to unclog drains when they see them
Enforce existing codes	Enforce existing codes	Provide long term payment plan for repairs	Limit absentee landlord ownership	Establish court-ordered community service clean up program	Implement into long term planning	Keep sidewalks clear and discourage pedestrians from walking on yards	Inform residents on how to request city repairs
Limit absentee landlord ownership	Change code to make resident responsible	Limit absentee landlord ownership	Foster a culture of stewardship	Foster a culture of stewardship	Foster a culture of stewardship		
Implement tool sharing program	Provide financial resources						
Provide financial resources	Provide guidelines and instruction for care and maintenance						
Provide recommendations of contractors & laborers	Provide recommendations of contractors & laborers						

### Who is Responsible?

### Why is this Happening?

### What are some Solutions?

## Action Strategies

From the suggested solutions, we derived the following action strategies.

Encourage the city to enforce existing codes more strictly.

Encourage the city to make maintenance projects a high priority.

Research the feasibility of snow removal options including a city-run program and a neighborhood co-op program.

Consolidate and distribute information regarding currently available programs to assist residents in repairing and maintaining their property.

Provide a set of guidelines and instructions for proper care, maintenance and repairs of home and property.

Provide a list of recommended contractors and skilled laborers.

Develop a neighborhood volunteer group that loans tools, provides advice and runs educational seminars on proper care, maintenance and repairs of home and property.

Provide financial resources (such as subsidies or low-interest loans) for those who wish to care for their home and property but who are limited financially.

Research feasibility of setting limitations on landlord ownership, such as requiring landlords within the overlay district to provide all home and yard maintenance as well as snow and garbage removal as part of lease.

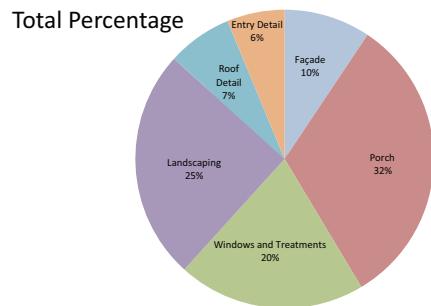
Provide residents with high-quality standard issue garbage cans with latching lids.

Form a focus group to develop a plan on how to foster a culture of care and stewardship in the neighborhood.

## Next Steps

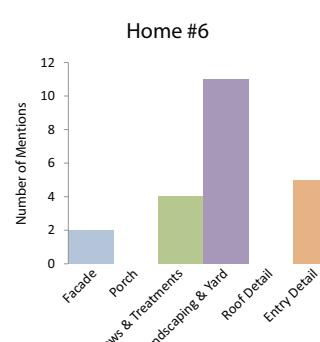
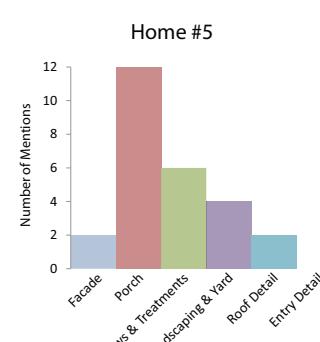
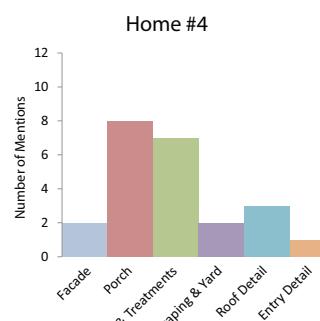
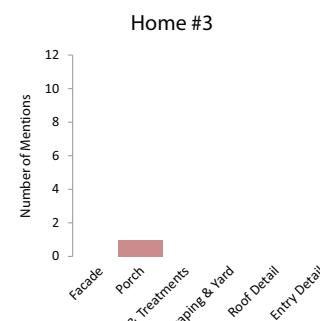
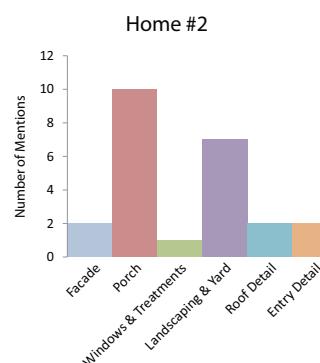
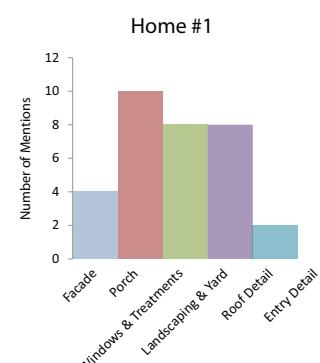
We have formed several focus groups that will work on developing additional action strategies and focusing on specific ones in greater depth.

## Defining Housing Characteristics Activity Analysis



### Activity Summary

The purpose of this activity was to gain a better understanding of the physical characteristics of homes in the University Neighborhood. A total of 14 activity entries were completed in the Second Community Forum on March 5th, 2011. About 60% of the participants were owners in the University Neighborhood and 40% were landlords within the Neighborhood. The pie chart to the left represents the total percentage of mentions that specific characteristics or details were outlined by the participants. The images and graphs below visually represent how each characteristic was outlined in total.



## What the Stakeholders are Saying

### Facade:

"Varying facade texture"  
"Use of different materials"  
"Use of wood/masonry materials"  
"Different colors"

### Porch:

"Summer living"  
"Neighborhood communication"  
"Open porches"  
"Detail Lattice work"  
"Post and beam details"  
"Love the pillars"  
"Railing detail"

### Windows & Treatments:

"Window projections(dormers, bay windows)"  
"Leaded glass windows"  
"Real shutters"  
"Stained glass"

### Landscaping & Yard:

"Shrubs"  
"Topography, "Curb appeal elevation"  
"Nice lawn"  
"Landscaping to soften box style house"  
"Shade trees"  
"Effective landscapeing"  
"Symetry of plantings"  
"Flower pots"

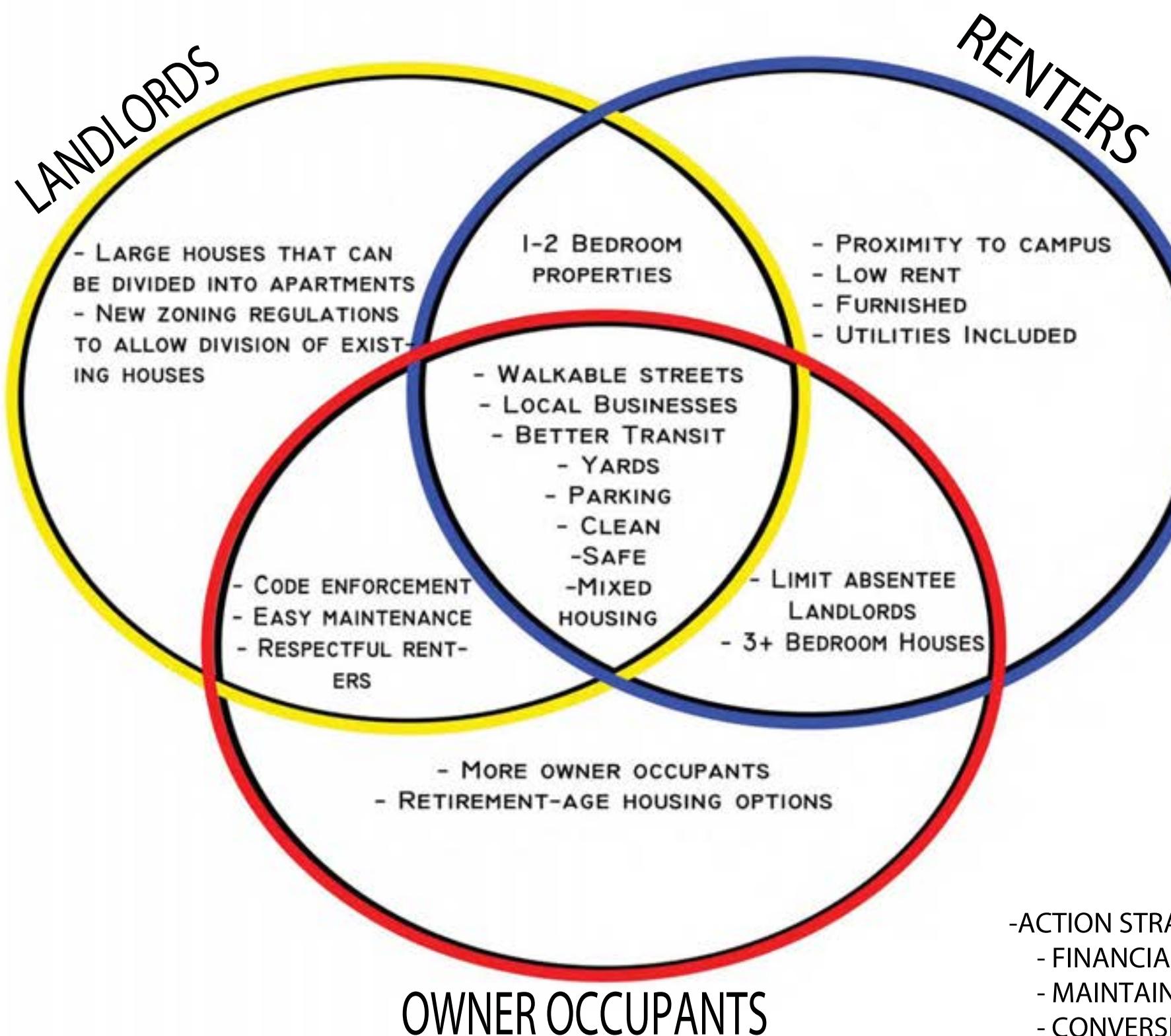
### Roof Detail:

"Roof trim"  
"Soffit and gable details"  
"Roof texture"  
"Roof lines"

### Entry Detail:

"Entrance focus"  
"Interesting details on doors"  
"Decorative entry"  
"Arch" detail (above door)

The Big Issues described by the Stakeholders	Defining Characteristic	Community Suggested Action Strategies	Follow-up Questions	Other Suggested Action Strategies	Follow-up Questions
Front Porch as a Social Space	Keep open and Maintain defining characteristics	- What are the exact defining characteristics they are talking about?	*Train/educate landlords and homeowners on proper ways to address the front porch as a social space	- Create workshops and make them a mandatory event for all landlords/homeowners who do not	
	Educate the community about this space as an importance to a community	- Where would we find appropriate material to educate the public on this matter?	* Explain the positives on keeping the front porch as a social space	- workshop/forums, brochure, or newspaper	
		What types of activities take place on a porch that make these social spaces?	* Create a annual event where neighborhood communities have "porch parties" to show the importance of these structures	- Create a community group to organize and execute such an neighborhood activity	
Landscaping & Yard	Low cost method of increasing value	- What is considered to be low cost?	* Create an annual garden tour to showcase and educate community about appropriate landscape treatments to establish community pride	- Create a community group to organize and execute such an neighborhood activity	
	Community programs to generate interest and promote a sense of community	- Where would we get the expert to generate and execute the community programs?	* Workshops/Forums to educate the community on proper landscape treatments	- Find the proper educator in proper landscape treatments	
Create a public awareness of Historical Accuracy	Historical preservation society to educate the community	- Who is qualified to educate the community on historical preservation?	* Bring in a National Historic Preservationist to discuss the benefits to being a Nationally recognized district	- Contact the National Historical Preservation society and ask for a local representative to help in the educating process	
	Make historical/architectural resources easily accessible to the community	- What resources and where are they?	* Show precedents of places in/around the neighborhood that are on national registry	- Do Internet research/library research for precedents, which will prove the success of the proposed ideas	
			* Make a neighborhood brochure to help residents understand the history of their home and neighborhood	- Use local resources, CCDR and UNPA to create an informational brochure for the purpose of educating the public	
Architectural Details and Styles (windows, doors, trim, gables, decorative elements, soffits, columns, spindles, facade variety)	Make resources available to community for their education	- What are those resources? Where would the resources be available? Libraries, community centers etc.?	* Create an annual housing tour to showcase and educate community about appropriate architectural/housing treatments to establish community pride	- Create a community group to organize and execute such an neighborhood activity	
	Create incentives to encourage proper renovations/improvements	- What incentives would you want? What are proper renovations/improvements?	* Outreach to find experts/craftsmen in the appropriate housing styles	- Where do we reach out to find these experts? How far out do we want to look?	
			* Create a panel of experts who upon request can show to a particular house and identify the various details to change and keep	- Find out who can be that panel of experts	



#### ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

- IN THIS ACTIVITY WE EXPLORED WHAT DIVERSITY IN A NEIGHBORHOOD MEANS AND HOW THAT CAN BE SUPPORTED THROUGH HOUSING CHOICES. PARTICIPANTS FILLED OUT A CHART WITH THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC, DESIRED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS, ACTION STRATEGIES, AND COMMENTS. THE GRAPHIC ON THE LEFT REPRESENTS A SUMMARY OF THE MOST FREQUENT ANSWERS (EXAMPLES IN CHART BELOW)

Demographics Included in Study:

Landlords, Students, Couples (inc. empty nesters), Families, Professionals

Demographics Not Represented:

Low Income, Elderly, Faculty, Young Professionals

What it all means...

- Parking: Desire for more off-street parking on property
- Yards: Size and good conditions are important to residents
- Clean: Limit amount of litter through stewardship and responsibility
- Safe: Lower crime/vandalism rates in and around neighborhood
- 1-2 Beds: Landlords want to buy these properties because they appeal to multiple demographics (couples, professionals, grad students)
- Larger houses (3+ beds) for families and groups of renters looking to save on rent by living with more people

#### -ACTION STRATEGIES

- FINANCIAL INCENTIVE FOR COOPERATION TO MEET CODE
- MAINTAIN AND RESTORE EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURE, RENOVATE INTERIOR
- CONVERSION OF LARGE BUILDINGS TO CONDO HOUSING
- INCREASE BUS STOPS AND ROUTE FREQUENCY



## EXISTING USES OF WESTCOTT BUSINESS DISTRICT

### CHARACTERISTICS

1. Hierarchical social meeting place of University Neighborhood area.
2. People expect to get services, living needs, and entertainments (eg. food shopping, services, library, etc)
3. Used by local people – small scaled and intimate characteristics demanded.
4. No consistency of giving sense of business district (disconnectivity, lack of physical design unity, inconvenient parking, circulation, and need more variety of businesses)



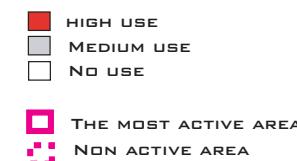
Businesses currently used by people



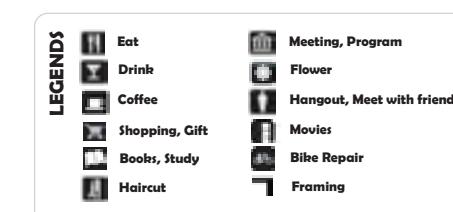
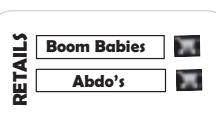
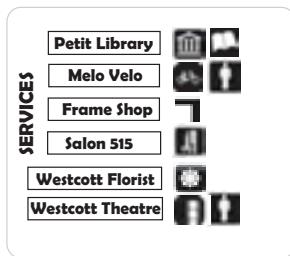
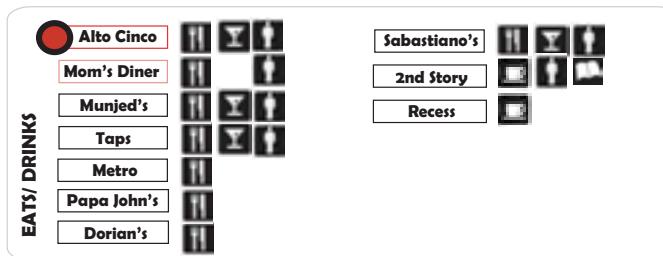
Top 3 active places  
(Alto Cinco, Petit Library, Mom's Diner)



Most active area vs. most unactive area



### EXISTING BUSINESSES AND USES IN WESTCOTT BUSINESS DISTRICT



### SUGGESTED BUSINESSES

## DATA SUMMARY

Area is not perceived as pedestrian friendly	More crosswalks Bike lane Bike racks/lots Traffic calming	Use a Complete Streets Plan to accomodate all users and modes of transportation
Underutilized outdoor spaces No green roofs Snow removal is inconsistent	Wider sidewalks Outdoor seating Greeneries and flowers	Incorporate green infrastructure projects to address issues of sustainability Set up a Maintenance Plan
Area is not perceived to be safe at night	Nighttime safety lighting Police walking at night	
Off street parking is insufficient and unattractive	Increase public parking area Remove metered parking Screen parking lots Turn Dorian's parking lot into a multi-use open greenspace	Study area parking usage to develop an appropriate parking plan
Most businesses are restaurants/bars Vacant buildings Area is not perceived as a destination	Grocery store Pharmacy Hardware store	Lower property taxes and rental rates to attract businesses Set up a Business Improvement Plan Use branding to make the District an attractive destination

The Westcott St. Business District should be a pedestrian friendly, bikeable, diverse shopping area, with more efficient parking options, more usable greenspaces, and better nighttime safety.



### STREETVIEWS OF WESTCOTT BUSINESS DISTRICT

Street parkings  
Wasted spaces for parking (Dorian's and Papa John's)  
Unfriendly walkways, and streetscapes (No greens)  
Inconsistency of building styles and signs (Design aspects)  
No welcoming atmosphere

## UNDERUTILIZED AND CONCERN AREAS



1. Parking lot next to Abdo's and Grassy Knoll  
Wasted space
2. Dorian's parking lot  
Large unattractive lot  
Not always being used
3. UNC building  
Wasted space, only actively used once a week
4. Westcott - South Beech intersection  
Dangerous, speeding traffic
5. Papa John's parking lot  
Large unattractive lot
6. HR Block building  
Downstairs space is vacant
7. Westcott-Harvard intersection  
Dangerous, speeding traffic



8. Corner sidewalk garden (mural) on Westcott - South Beech intersection  
Not well maintained
9. Parking lot behind UNC building  
Large unattractive lot
10. 7 Rays building  
Vacant space
11. Public parking lot  
Large unattractive lot
12. Parking lot Next to New Garden  
Large unattractive lot
13. Parking lot between Taps and Convenience Store  
Large unattractive lot

This data is insufficient to determine the use of Westcott Business District due to limited participation during 2nd Neighborhood Forum.

# University Neighborhood Housing Plan

Second forum results and  
design study presentation

May 7, 2011



SUNY ESF Center for Community  
Design Research

# Purpose of the Housing Plan

- To create a plan, focusing on housing and quality of life, that will guide actions by the multiple stakeholders that contribute to or influence the neighborhood's quality of life
  - including residents, landlords, businesses, non-profit organizations, institutions and city departments

## Where are we in the process

- First stage – understanding neighborhood values, assets and concerns
  - Preliminary goals
- Second stage – exploring alternatives
  - Refining goals and considering action strategies
  - Design and research studies
- Third stage – defining action strategies and documenting final housing plan

## Agenda for today's forum

- Summary of first and second stage results
- Overview of student design studies
- Design Review session 1
- Design Review session 2

# First stage and first community forum

- Valued areas
- Areas of concern
- Housing and neighborhood characteristics to keep and change
- Vision ideas



# **Vision activity – How do you want to be able to describe the neighborhood in 10 years?**

- Stabilization/balance/equalization of renters to owner occupants
- Diversity of residents
- Active community with better cooperation
- High standard of care for properties
- Walkable neighborhood
- Safe and active bike and bus routes
- Thriving business district
- Integrity of architectural features

# Synthesis – Areas of Agreement

- **Strengths-Resources-Highly Valued – What you want to Keep**
  - Houses – the style, age and details
  - Diversity of residents
  - Location, and proximity to university and other areas
  - Community resources – parks and business district
  - Walkability

## **Synthesis – Areas of Agreement**

- **Concerns – Challenges – What you want to Change and improve**
  - Declining condition and appearance of some houses
  - Poor care of some property
  - Parking and congestion
  - Poor communication
  - Safety/security

## **Synthesis - Areas of divergence**

- Is it desirable and/or possible to maintain or achieve a “balance” (or some other ratio) of owner occupied and rental/student rental properties?
- Is it desirable and/or possible to alleviate the concentration of students in the western portion of the neighborhood?

## Second forum explored issues in more depth

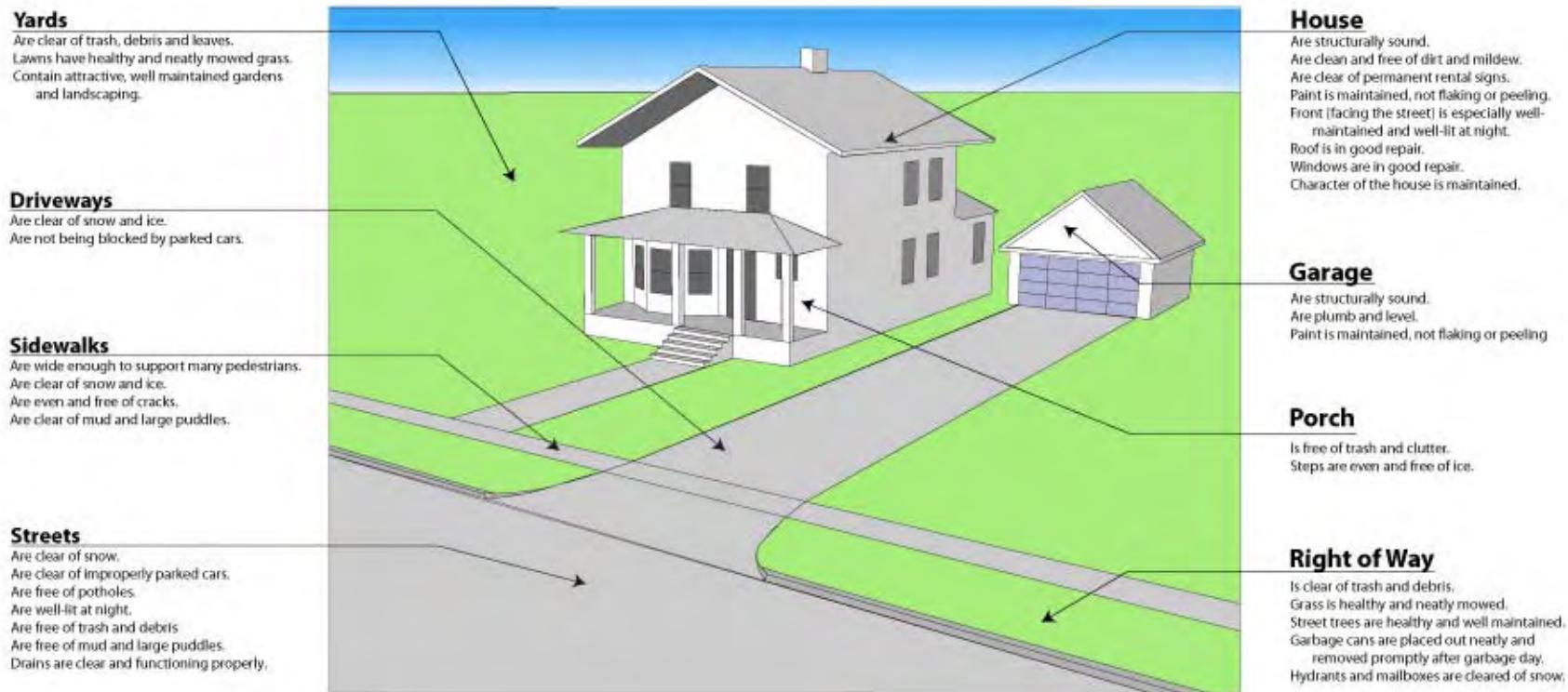
- Care and maintenance of private and public property
- Mobility and circulation
- Defining valued house characteristics
- Housing choices
- Westcott Street



# Forum 2

## Care and maintenance

- Basic expectations



## Forum 2

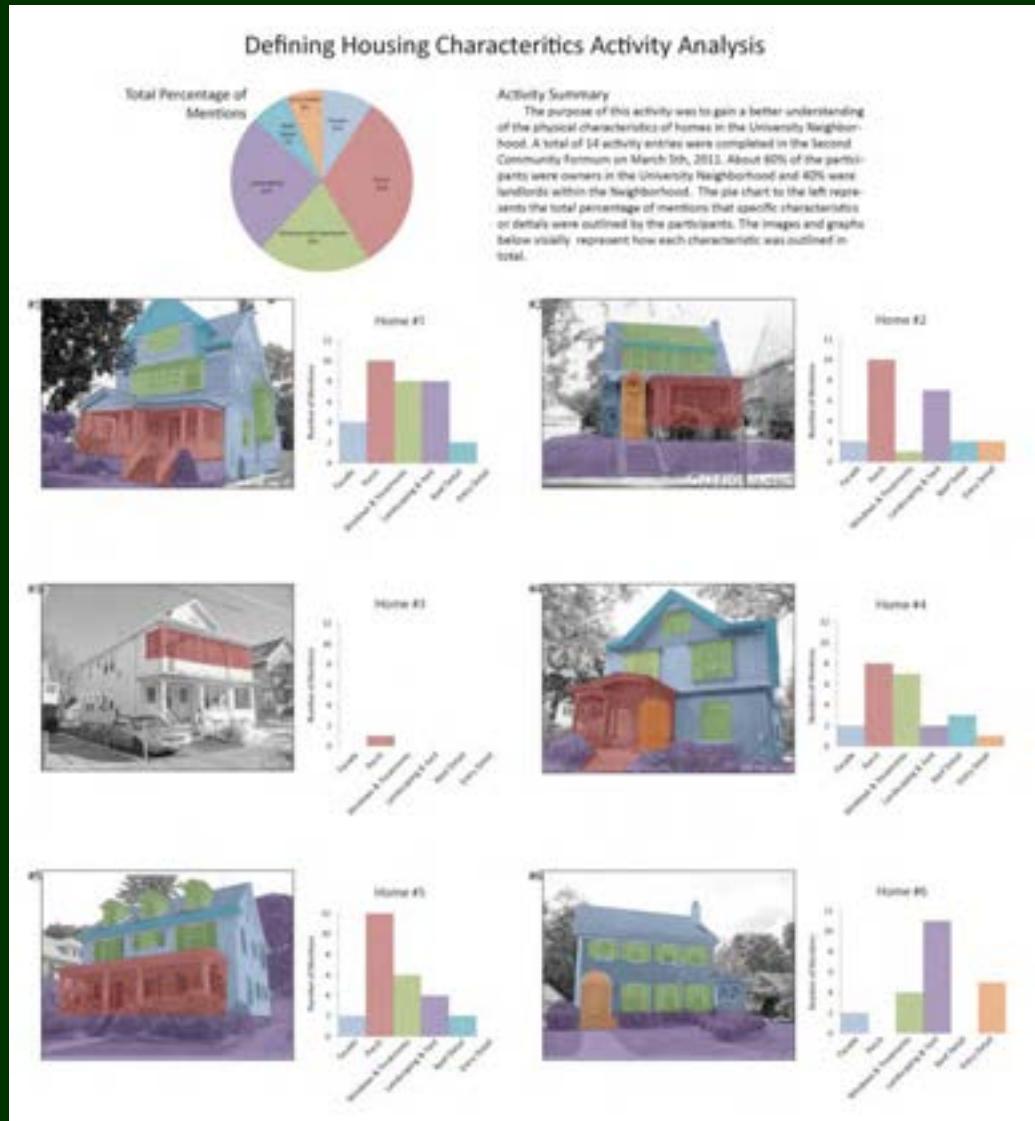
### Care and maintenance

- Problem and solutions identification
  - Care and maintenance of a neighborhood is a shared responsibility, relying on and contributing to pride of place and sense of ownership
  - Action strategies: Addressing the issues involves actions by multiple stakeholders, individuals and groups



# Forum 2

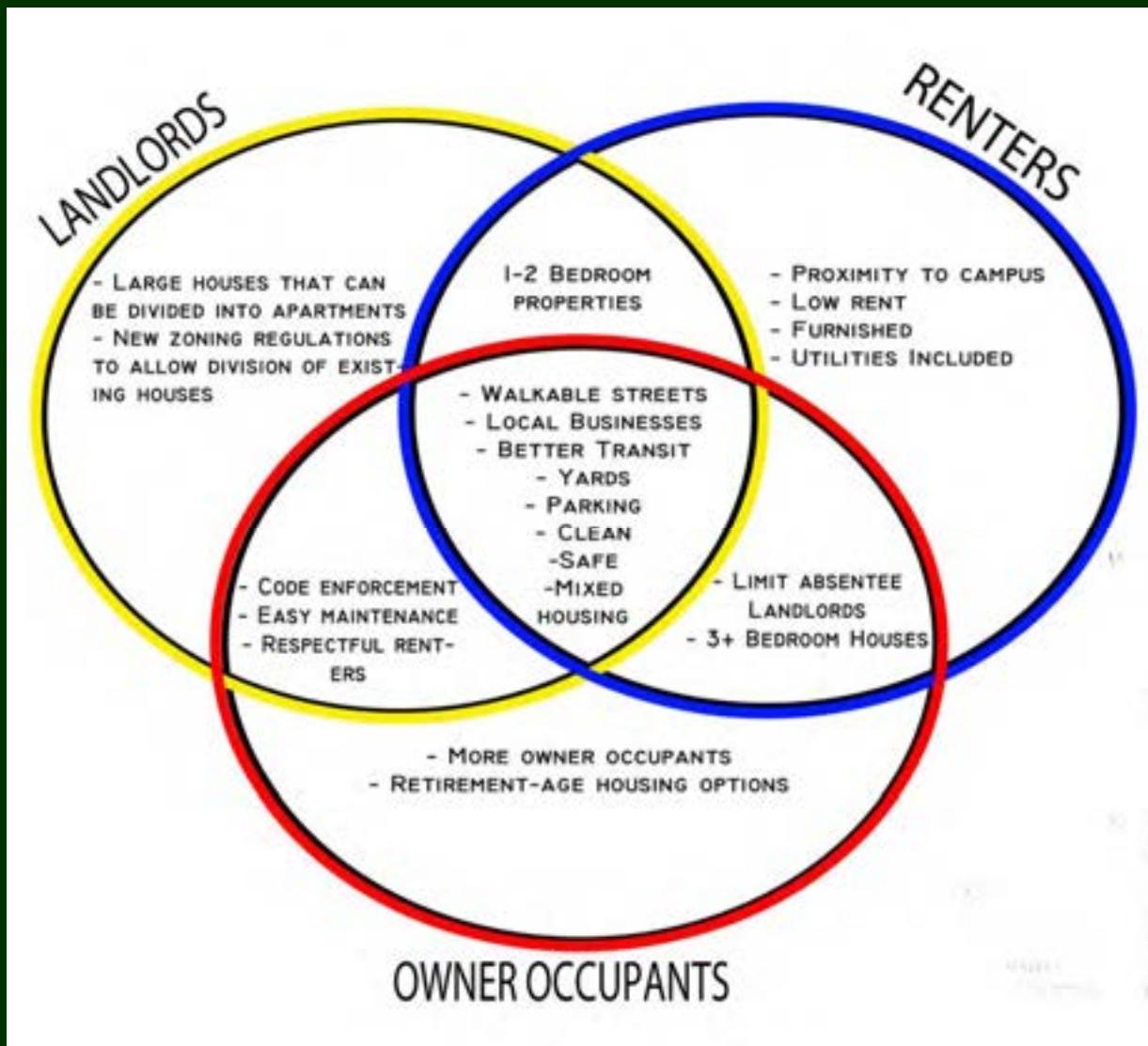
## Defining valued home characteristics



- Front porch as social space
- Yard and landscape as setting
- Awareness of house and neighborhood history
- Respect for architectural details

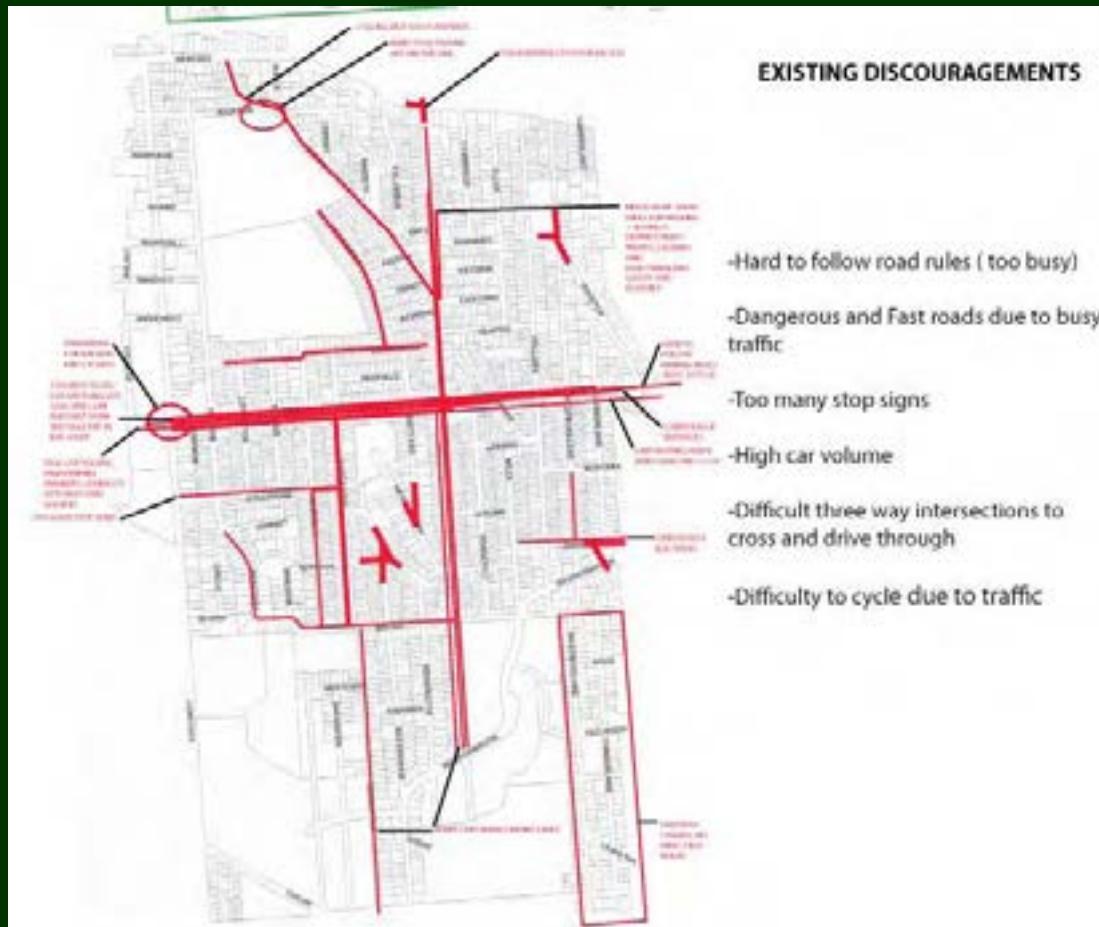
# Forum 2

## Housing Choices



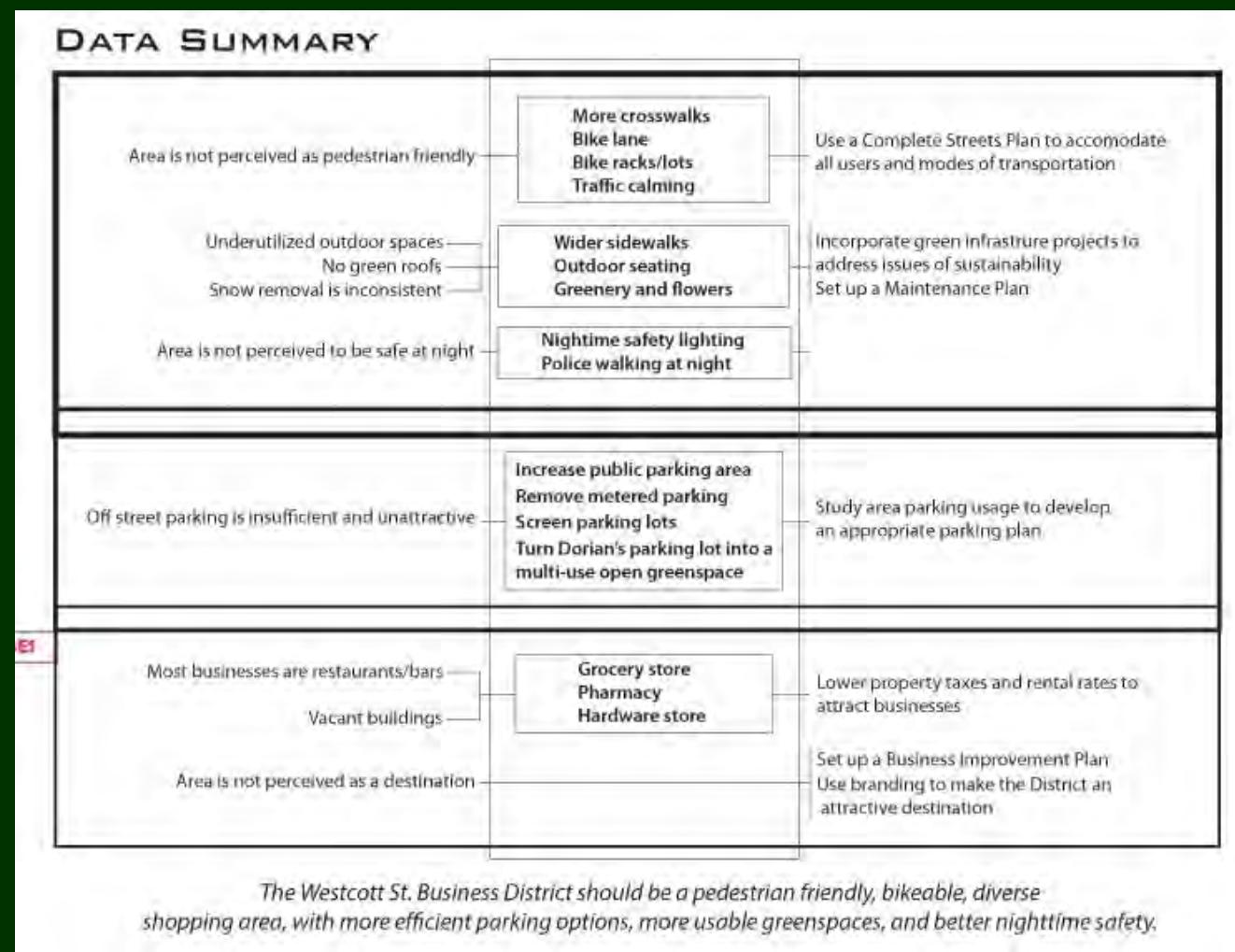
## Forum 2

# Mobility and circulation



- More bike lanes and routes
- Defined entrances to neighborhood
- Improve walking conditions and maintenance of sidewalks

# Westcott Street



# Draft Goals

- Establish a **culture of care and stewardship** based on shared respect for public and private property and pride in the neighborhood.
- Promote a **mix of high quality housing options** that encourage a diversity of residents including rentals, traditional home ownership, and other ownership models (such as condominiums, cooperatives, housing associations).
- Retain and enhance **the traditional physical characteristics of the neighborhood** which define its image including the style, scale and detail of the housing stock; the density, setback and structure of the residential blocks; and the neighborhood gateways and primary circulation routes.

## Draft Goals (con't)

- Encourage a **reduced reliance on cars** and mitigate their negative impacts on the neighborhood.
- Advance **improvements to the neighborhood parks** to strengthen their important role in contemporary quality of life while respecting their cherished characteristics.
- **Strengthen the Westcott Business District** as a walkable mixed use shopping, gathering and entertainment destination.
- Promote the perception and reality of the University neighborhood as a **safe place to live and visit**.

# **Student research and design studies**

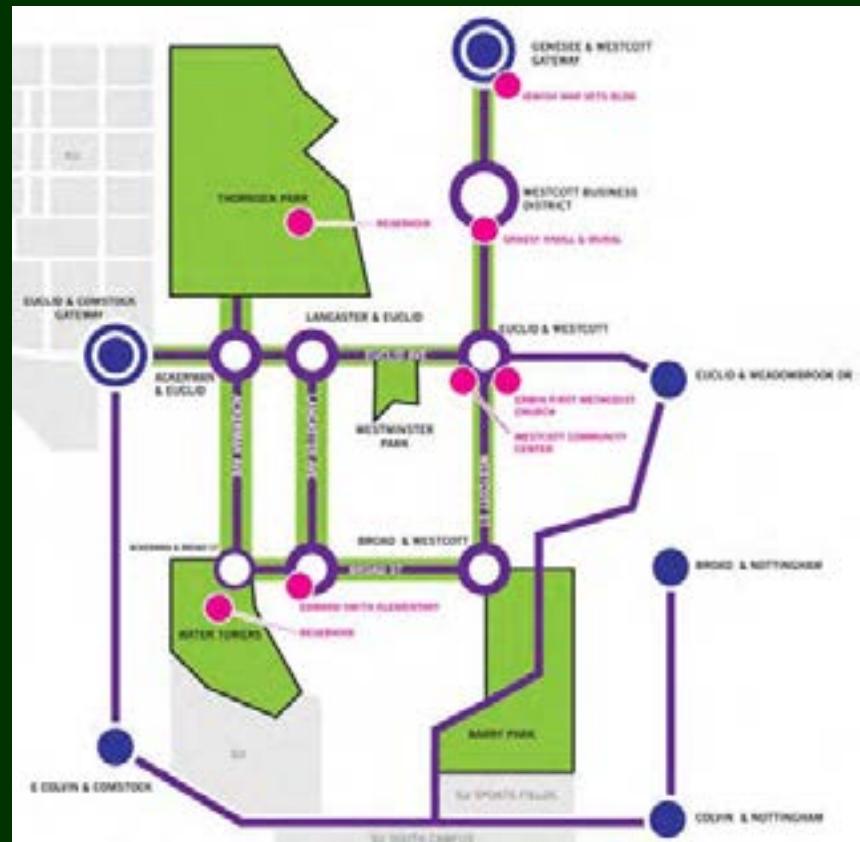
- Explorations of alternative ways to achieve the goals
- Research to better understand the issues
- Design as a form of inquiry to better understand the issues and promote discussion

## Three broad topic areas

- Image and identity
- Circulation and Movement
- Diversity of housing choices

# Image and identity studies

- Gateways and nodes
  - Euclid corridor
  - Broad Street corridor
- Park connections



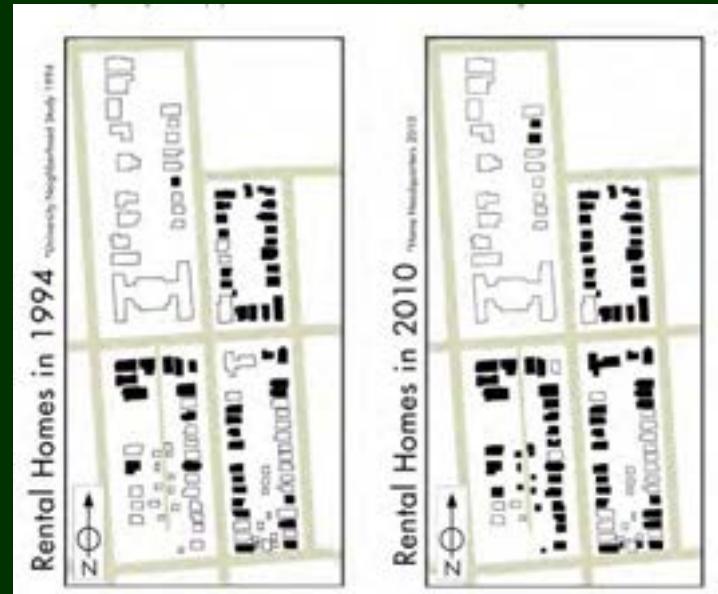
## Circulation and movement studies

- Parking study
- Euclid corridor
- Westcott Business District



# Housing related studies

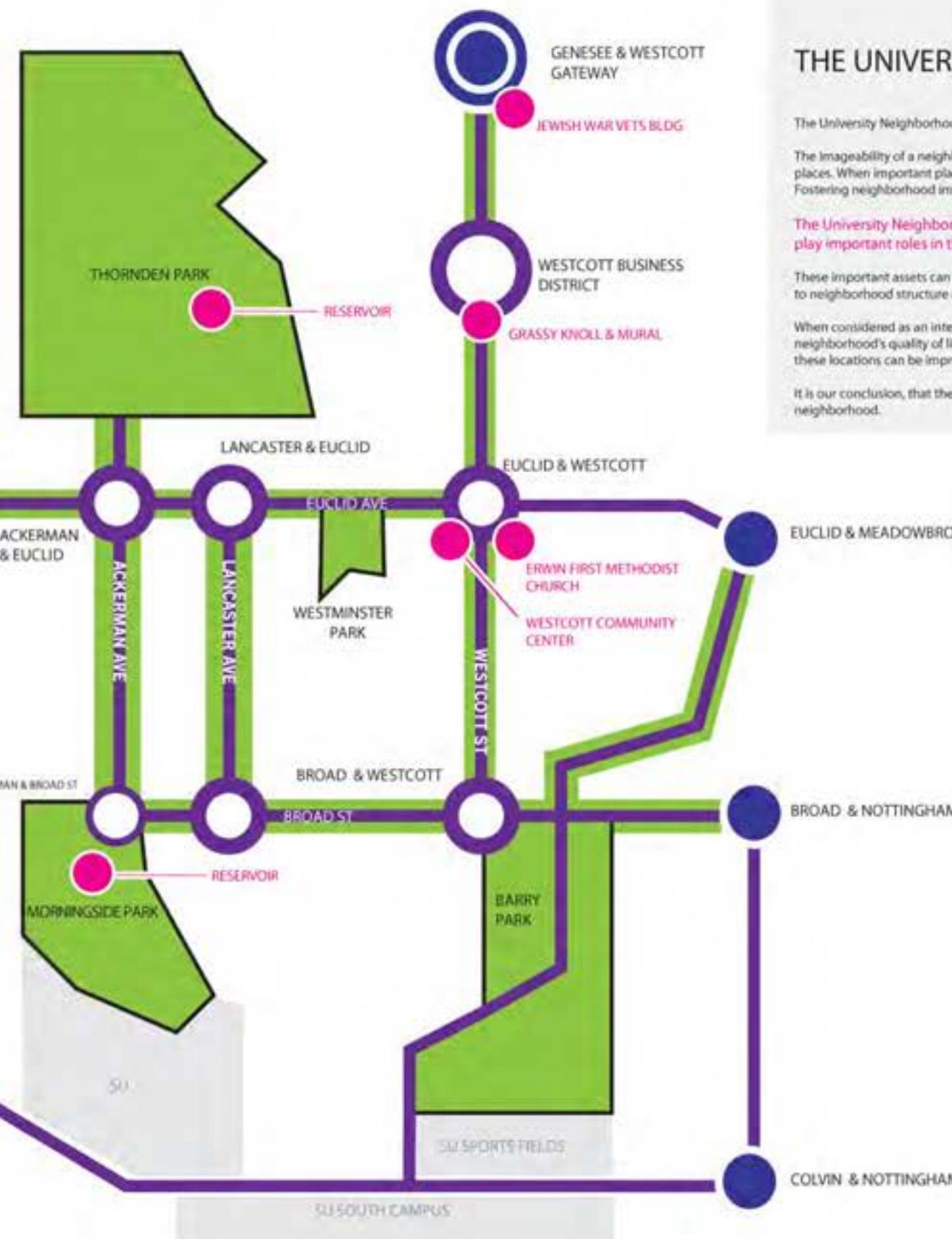
- Analysis of the key inter-section of the University and the University neighborhood
- Analysis of ownership trends



## **Presentation and review sessions**

- Two sessions – each about 40 minutes
  - Students will present design or research studies
  - Community members provide comments and ask questions
  - Record comments as group if time allows

- There will be a final forum in the near future to review the goals and action strategies
- Thanks for taking the time to be here today



## THE UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD IMAGEABILITY PLAN

The University Neighborhood lacks 'imageability'.

The imageability of a neighborhood determines how easy or difficult it is for someone to identify the neighborhood's assets and valued places. When important places in the neighborhood lack proper attention, care, and connection, a neighborhood lacks in physical imageability. Fostering neighborhood imageability is an important step in creating neighborhood stewardship, pride, and maintenance.

The University Neighborhood Imageability Plan is really an inventory of important physical neighborhood assets which play important roles in the University Neighborhood's daily rituals of work, play, and community life.

These important assets can be culturally and recreationally significant like Thornden Park and the Westcott Business District, or important to neighborhood structure and commute such as Euclid Avenue.

When considered as an interdependent whole, these neighborhood assets can create a valuable system that can improve the neighborhood's quality of life. Each one of these nodes, corridors, and gateways have varying uses and functions. The study of how some of these locations can be improved to help the overall image of the neighborhood is the goal of the following study.

It is our conclusion, that the success of the University Neighborhood depends on the proper design and care for this system within the neighborhood.

### MAP KEY

- PEDESTRIAN & VEHICULAR GATEWAY
- VEHICULAR GATEWAY
- IMPORTANT NEIGHBORHOOD NODE/INTERSECTION
- NEIGHBORHOOD LANDMARK
- GREEN SPACE
- SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY PROPERTY
- PEDESTRIAN & VEHICULAR CORRIDOR
- VEHICULAR CORRIDOR



## COMSTOCK + EUCLID

### What goes on there?

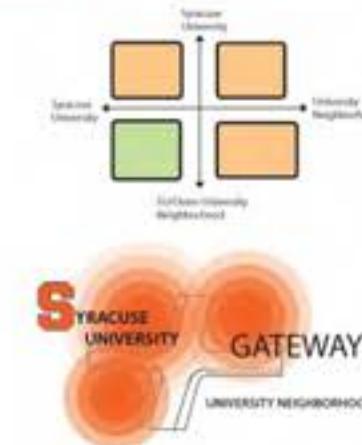
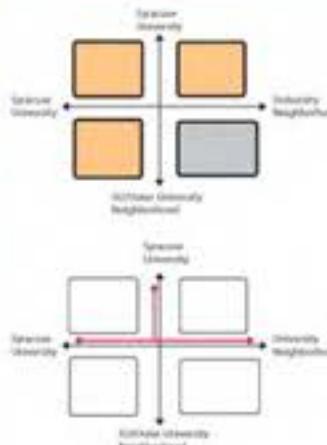
- Busy intersection 24/7
- Students to/from campus
- Games at Carrier Dome
- Through traffic
- Connective Corridor and neighborhood bus routes

### Assets

- Connects campus to neighborhood
- Wide intersection
- Wide sidewalks
- Convenient bus stop location
- Clear change in texture
- Access to SU baseball diamond

### What can it be?

- Gateway to the University Neighborhood
- Wayfinding hub
- Meeting place
- Lush greenspace
- Transportation hub
- School spirit locus



## COMSTOCK AND WESTCOTT - EUCLID INTERSECTION IMAGE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore the way that important neighborhood gateways can be improved to serve as better pedestrian and vehicular environments. The focus of this analysis was how to give these gateways the presence they need to highlight the area's character, community diversity, and provide a way to orient oneself in the neighborhood. The goal of the study was to improve these gateways in aesthetic and functional ways and also establish a connection between them. The repetition of elements such as plantings, crosswalks, bus shelters, and street signs helps to visually establish this connection. By varying their colors and shapes at each intersection it highlights each gateway's diverse character and texture.

## EUCLID + WESTCOTT

### What goes on there?

- busy intersection 24/7
- Through traffic
- Weekly activities at Community Center and Church
- Quick stop shopping at Grabby's
- Bus stop

### Assets

- Community meeting centers
- Central location
- Small business

### What can it be?

- Wayfinding hub
- Meeting place
- Transportation hub
- Neighborhood landmark
- Information center
- Expression board



GROUND PLANE

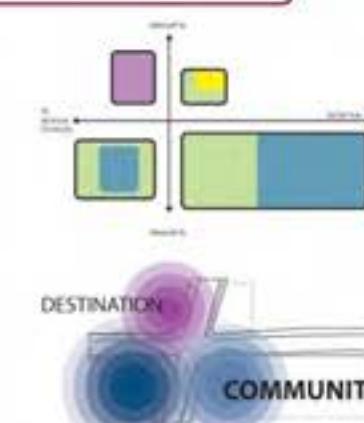
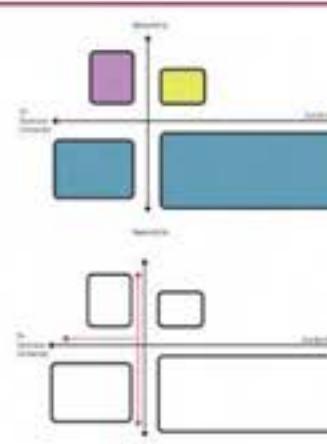
BUILDING MASS



TREE COVER



HUMAN SCALE



## ACKERMAN + BROAD

What goes on there?	Assets	What can it be?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People walk to reservoir</li> <li>People walk to playground</li> <li>Mild traffic</li> <li>Vandalism</li> <li>Community Gardening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visibly Connects to Thornden Park</li> <li>Water reservoir overlook access</li> <li>Morningside Community Gardens</li> <li>Morningside Heritage Trail access</li> <li>School playground access</li> <li>Empty Field</li> <li>Travel to Barry Park node is downhill from here</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used as a connective intersection for a "complete street" to Thornden Park &amp; Barry Park</li> <li>Appropriate Morningside Garden &amp; Water reservoir overlook as an Outdoor recreation hub <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Bike/ walkway</li> <li>Nature trails</li> <li>Community gardening</li> <li>Neighborhood compost</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



SATELLITE VIEW



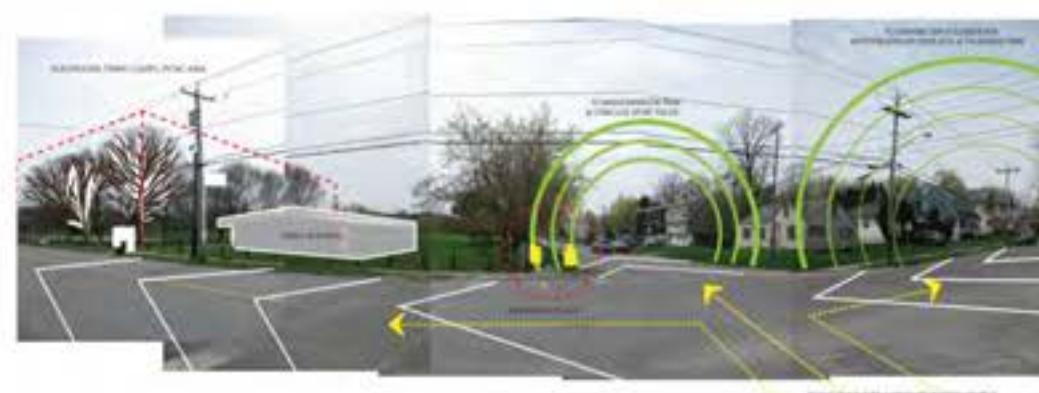
ROAD MAP



## BROAD STREET NEIGHBORHOOD IMAGE STUDY

The Purpose of this study was to explore the way neighborhood assets such as Barry Park, Thornden Park, and Morningside Community Gardens can be improved. To foster healthy neighborhood activities which appeal to a wide range of people. The focus for this analysis was how to connect such places with similar assets.

Depicted on this board is the analysis of Broad Street, with the Ackerman and Westcott intersections as focal points for possible improvements. The goal of the study was to improve the design of both intersections and its separate needs while also connecting these recreation places. Broad Street can be an important part of a neighborhood park system that is connected through well designed streets that allow for biking and walking. Such a park system would encourage community stewardship and attract future homeowners.



SATELLITE VIEW



## WESTCOTT + BROAD

What goes on there?	Assets	What can it be?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Busy intersection 24/7</li> <li>Park Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Organized Sports</li> <li>Dog Walking</li> </ul> </li> <li>Newspaper pickup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corner of Barry Park</li> <li>Connects to Meadowbrook Park</li> <li>Park Activities encourage walking &amp; bike riding</li> <li>Small Park Dept. building</li> <li>Flagpole</li> <li>Picnic area</li> <li>The park's boundaries are open making park activities visible from streets and hours.</li> <li>Downhill from Ackerman node</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community gathering space</li> <li>Outdoor Activity Community Center</li> <li>Community gathering space</li> <li>Picnic Area &amp; Concessions</li> </ul>



SATELLITE VIEW



## Ostrum Ave. Challenges:

**Analysis:**  
High vehicular use deters pedestrian crossing.  
A topographic high point in the road, as seen in the photo, limits the line of sight.



**Proposed:**  
More pedestrian crossings with visibility to vehicles, preferably a crossing at the top of the high point in the road so pedestrians are visible to vehicles in both directions.

## Housing View into Thornden Park:



**Analysis:**  
View of housing backing up on the park. The view is looking down from the water tower in the park. In the winter there are better views into the park due to lack of foliage. In the summer, the foliage limits views and reduces "eyes on the park".

**Proposed:**  
The trees could be selectively pruned to improve views into the park or selectively cut down to thin the edge of the park.

## Purpose of Study:

The study of Thornden Park was developed after the analysis of the first and second forum activities. From the first forum, the park was identified as a highly valued part of the community, but it also had some weaknesses associated with it. From the second forum, there was more talk of circulation in the community and access to the amenities the community valued. From this, it was determined that there was a strong desire to improve access and movement through the park. Analysis revealed that the south entrance to Thornden Park was underutilized and needed to have a stronger tie to the community. Design studies of Ackerman Ave as a park entrance were developed to address this issue.

## Thornden Park Analysis Map:



**Proposed Green Corridor:**  
Syracuse University proposed green corridor on campus could connect to Thornden Park.



### Improved Pedestrian Access:

**Analysis:**  
The connection of the east and west sides of Thornden exists, but is limited for pedestrians and bicyclists. As you can see in the image to the left there is no pedestrian or bike paths available to the water tower. The view from the water tower favors vehicular users.

**Proposed:**  
The addition of new or improved pedestrian and bike crossings in the park would promote park use and improve safety. The addition of a walkway and bike route to the water tower would encourage more people to enjoy the wonderful view, seen in lower image.



## Beach St. Entrance:



**Analysis:**  
Houses on a section of S. Beech Street have good views into the park.

**Proposed:**  
Promote views and relationship to park in the marketing of housing. Could help improve the neighborhood area on that side of the park.

## Pool Parking Lot:



**Analysis:**  
The parking lot adjacent to the pool complex is the primary parking lot for the park. Although we would like to reduce vehicular traffic in the park, parking near the pool must be provided. The parking lot is in poor condition. There are no marked parking spaces and the asphalt is in poor condition.

**Proposed:**  
The parking spots should be marked. The overall appearance should be improved with islands and plantings, adding to the desired park-like aesthetic.

## Ackerman Ave. Entrance:



**Analysis:**  
The existing entrance at Ackerman Ave. is on the southern end of the park. This end of the park is in close proximity to a large portion of the University Neighborhood Community.



As you can see from the photo on the lower left the elevation at the entrance lends itself to views down Ackerman Ave to Euclid and beyond. The photo to the left shows the entrance to the park. There is no signage or other marker indicating this entrance to the park.

**Proposed:**  
The pedestrian access to the park can be improved by the expansion of walkways in the park. Right now, the sidewalks end at the entrance of park. This can be seen in the photos below, showing the current and proposed sidewalks.



## Proposed Guidelines and design studies:

Based on this analysis the following improvements are recommended:

1. Ackerman Avenue entrance improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists.
2. Pedestrian access along the Ostrum St. corridor could involve the addition of pedestrian crosswalks and other traffic calming measures to promote the pedestrian crossing from the University side to the park side.
3. Investigate how the housing along S. Beech Street could be improved to give more of an inward looking feel on the park. The more people and houses looking in on the park can improve the perception of safety.
4. Investigate how the park could accommodate improved cross-pedestrian traffic. The more people that travel through the park the more eyes on the park. This would increase the perception of safety in the park and lower the chance of crime in the park.

**Proposed Sidewalk Added Throughout Park:**

This is illustrating the idea of a sidewalk that would give pedestrians better access to the park. The sidewalk would be continued from the city's existing walk ways.



One alternative for the new sidewalk is re-used brick paving to match the existing walk ways in the park.



Another alternative is to use the same type of concrete walk that the city implements in the city.



**Existing City Sidewalks:**  
Currently the city sidewalks only go to the park and not into it.

**Proposed Bike Lane to Park Entrance:**

This is the proposed bike lane connecting Euclid Ave. to Thornden Park. The scenario depicted to the right is of Ackerman Ave. with no parking and a separate bike lane. The bike lane is separated by a rumble strip, and is for two way bike traffic. If the parking is to be continued on Ackerman Ave., then the bike lane would be a simple shoulder on either side of the road, like Euclid is currently.



This is a shoulder bike lane, like the one currently on Euclid Ave. Were the shoulder is converted for bike traffic.



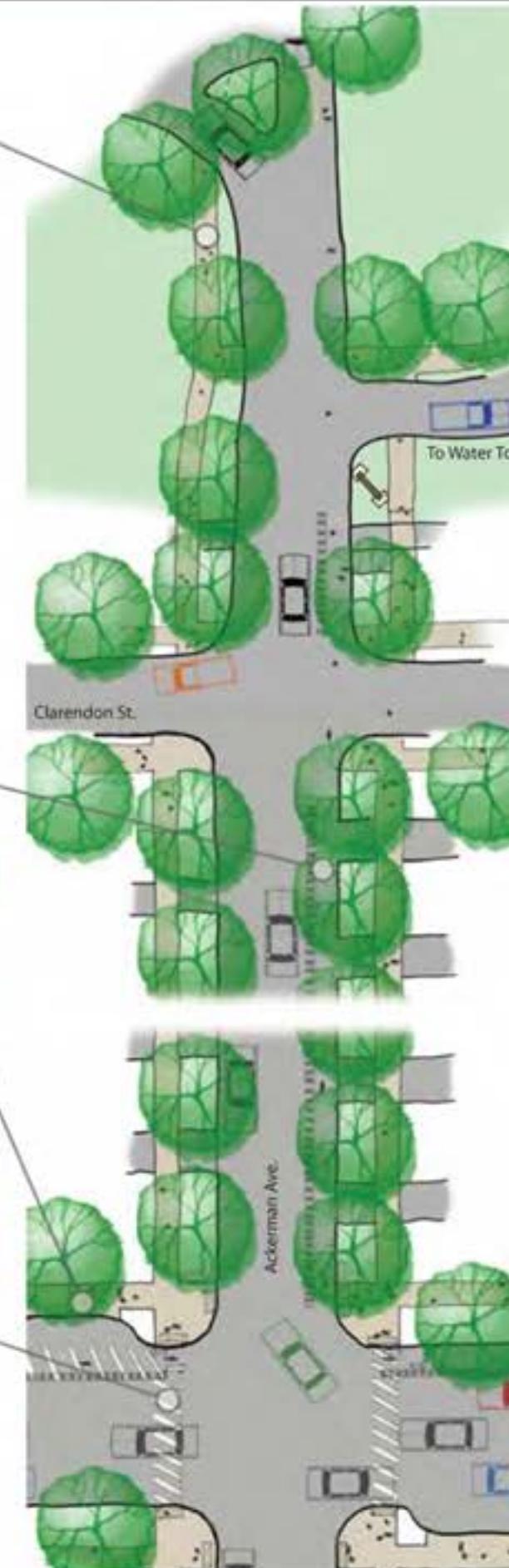
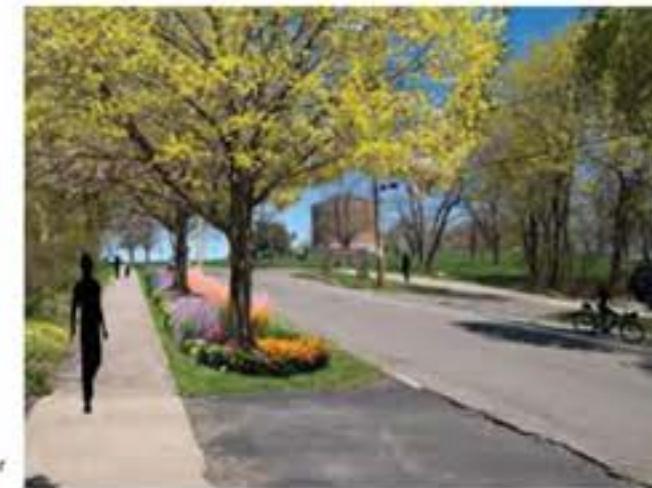
To the right is an example of a bike lane with a divider or planted median.

**Improved Bus Stop at Corner of Ackerman and Euclid:**

Currently there is no CENTRO service near the park, however there is frequent bus service on Euclid Ave., and stops at most intersections. This would be a stop that could be for the park, a Thornden Park bus stop. Below are some examples of bus shelters.

**Improved Crosswalk:**

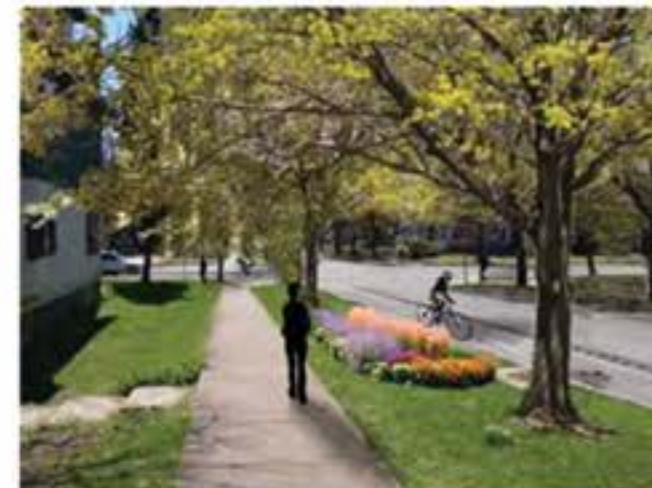
The familiar painted strip is not the only option for pedestrian crossing. The examples below show some other options that are available for the pedestrian crossing.

**Proposed Park Entrance:**

Left is a composite photo showing what the entrance to Thornden Park could look like. The sidewalks are extended into the park on both sides of the road. As shown, only the sidewalk on the west side of the road would continue further in to the park, minimizing disturbance to the park. There is an example of the new signage for the park that lets people know that this is an entrance. To the right is the bike lane extending in to the park for improved bicyclist use of the park.



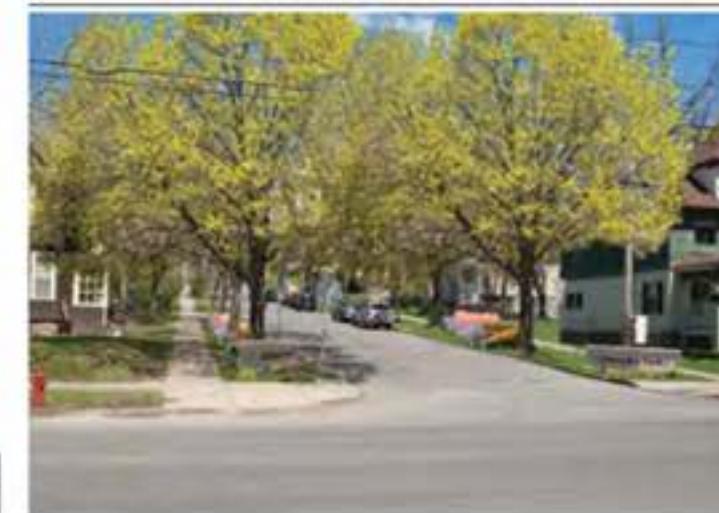
Existing Park Entrance:

**Proposed Ackerman Ave. Intersection:**

Left is a composite photo showing what Ackerman Ave. could look like. The removal of parking on the street improves pedestrian, and bicyclists use. The bike lane provides for two-way traffic and is separated from the vehicular traffic by means of a rumble strip. A consistent row of street trees and other plantings in the area between sidewalk and street will reinforce Ackerman Ave. as a "park" street.



Existing Ackerman Ave. Conditions:

**Proposed Park Signs at Euclid Ave.**

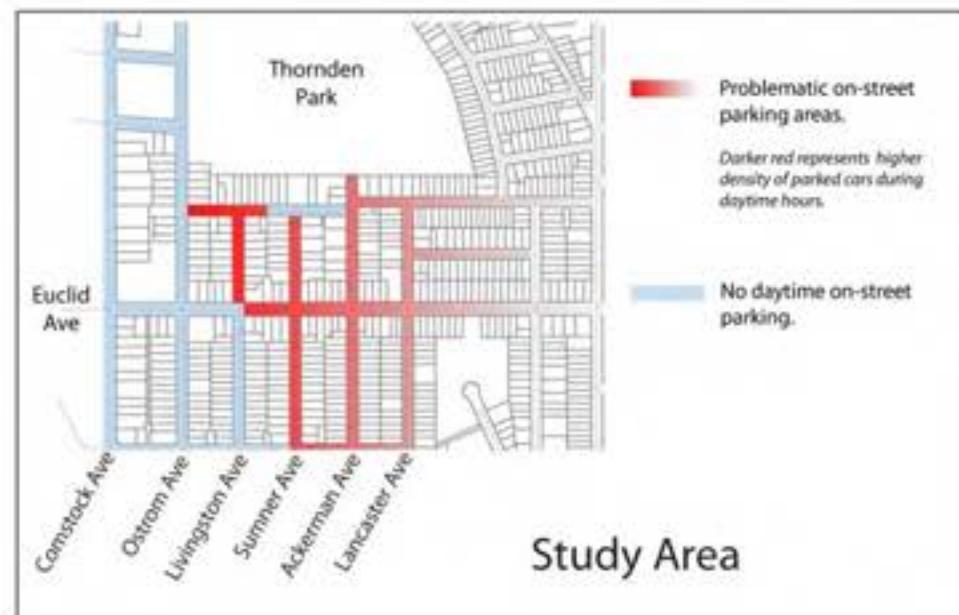
To the left is an example of what the intersection of Ackerman Ave. and Euclid Ave. might look like. Two signs on both sides of the intersection with the name of the park. This will let people know that the park entrance is up the street.

## Problems Identified in First Community Forum:

1. Not enough parking spaces for residents.
2. Parked cars are blocking driveways and sidewalks.
3. Illegal and improper parking make streets difficult to navigate.
4. Some drivers drop litter and damage lawns.
5. Streets lined with parked cars make visibility/mobility difficult for drivers, walkers & cyclists.

## Research Questions

1. What is the supply of off-street parking spaces?
2. What is the supply of on-street parking spaces?
3. What is the resident demand for parking (number of residents with cars)?
4. Who else is parking in the neighborhood? Why? When? How many?



## Study Methods

### Off-street supply



Aerial maps were used to count lot and driveway spaces.

Single lane driveways were counted as only one space.

Some streets were spot checked in person to ensure accuracy.

### Neighborhood demand

A quantitative figure of exactly how many residents have cars would be difficult to calculate and only relevant for a short period of time. Even more than other Syracuse neighborhoods, the University Neighborhood is constantly changing. However, if this information is something that the community considers important to gain, it could be achieved through analyzing current census or GIS data and supplementing that with a survey.

This study instead uses the data collected in the parking supply calculations to determine the number of cars that the neighborhood can currently support. To derive this number, the total number of off-street and on-street spaces in the study area were divided by the total number of buildings.

### On-street supply

Aerial maps were measured to count on-street spaces.

Driveways and no parking zones were taken into account.

The average number of spaces was determined, as there is a slight change between even and odd days due to alternate parking.

An average parking space length of 16' was used to calculate results.



### Nonresident parking

Through observation and anecdote, it has become apparent that many of the cars parked in the neighborhood during the day do not actually belong to neighborhood residents. Several observations were undertaken on different days at different times. Some significant differences were noted between days when school is in session for SU and ESF and when it is not.

#### Evenings and Weekends

Only about 90% of on-street spaces are filled.

#### Weekdays 6:30am - 8:00am

Adults begin to arrive and fill in the empty spaces along Euclid and Summer. These drivers parked their cars then walked towards the campus.

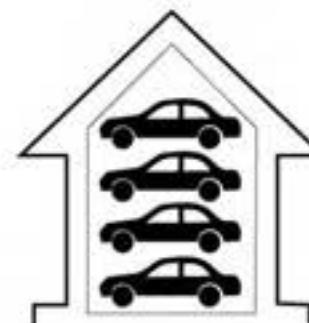
#### Weekdays 8:00am - 10:00am

Younger, student-aged drivers begin arriving and filling in empty spaces further East on Euclid, then on Summer, then Ackerman, then Lancaster, and finally parking in some odd placements that are not truly legal parking spaces. These drivers parked their cars then walked towards the campus.

## Study Results

Within the study area, the tally for each street is as follows:

	Totals
Ackerman	1064 off-street spaces 69 on-street spaces 51 building lots
Clarendon	366 on-street spaces 359 building lots
Euclid	3.0 off-street spaces per building 1.0 on-street parking spaces per building
Lancaster	245 off-street spaces 79 on-street spaces 83 building lots
Livingston	119 off-street spaces 60 on-street spaces 48 building lots
Ostrom	125 off-street spaces 60 on-street spaces 49 building lots
Summer	135 off-street spaces 72 on-street spaces 41 building lots



The neighborhood can support an average of **4 cars per building** with its current parking configuration.

## Conclusions

We determined through this study that the amount of parking spaces within the study area does support the number of vehicles owned by residents of the neighborhood. The oversaturation of vehicles occurs because the neighborhood is being used by commuters who live outside the neighborhood but work or go to school at one of the universities.

Although this study began as a simple investigation of whether or not there are enough parking spaces in the neighborhood, many additional issues and factors began to emerge as the study progressed. The high density of cars in this neighborhood on a daily basis has negative impacts that go beyond unavailability of open parking spaces. Neighborhood appearance, navigability, environmental quality and overall character are significantly affected by the neighborhood's oversaturation with vehicles.

Reducing the number of commuters parking in the neighborhood as well as lowering the overall density of cars in the neighborhood will alleviate issues concerning parking as well as achieve many of the other goals that the community has identified as being important.

Density can be lowered in two ways. The first is by increasing the supply for cars by providing more vehicular infrastructure (more parking, larger roads, etc). Given all of the community input we have received, this method does not seem in line with community values and visions. Instead, we suggest that this decrease in density be achieved by decreasing the number of cars in the neighborhood (by both residents and nonresidents). The recommendations below suggest some strategies that may be employed to achieve the desired results.

## Recommendations

### Permit system

- Restrict on-street parking within study area to residents only. This restriction could be in effect 24 hours a day, or it could only be in effect during school/work hours when there seems to be the largest problem.
- Consider adding resident only parking to the southern end of Livingston and Ostrom and to the western end of Stratford. As there is currently no daytime parking allowed on those street sections, allowing resident permit parking in those areas would add an additional 90 on-street spaces to residents.
- Many municipalities use this method, one good example to look into is the Corn Hill Neighborhood in Rochester, NY.

### Expand Park-and Ride program

- Advertise current system and consider asking the universities to provide incentives to commuting faculty staff and students who use the park and ride.
- Consider expanding current lots at Manley Field House or adding park and ride lots at South Campus. Look at Park and Ride feasibility study undertaken by SMTIC for references.

### Encourage use of alternative modes of transportation

- Improve sidewalks and bike lanes so that those who live relatively close can walk or bike to campus.
- Encourage the use of CNG buses through marketing or incentives. Consider providing bus shelters for users commuting in inclement weather.
- Encourage car pooling through marketing and incentives such as closer parking spaces.

### Urge universities to provide adequate parking options

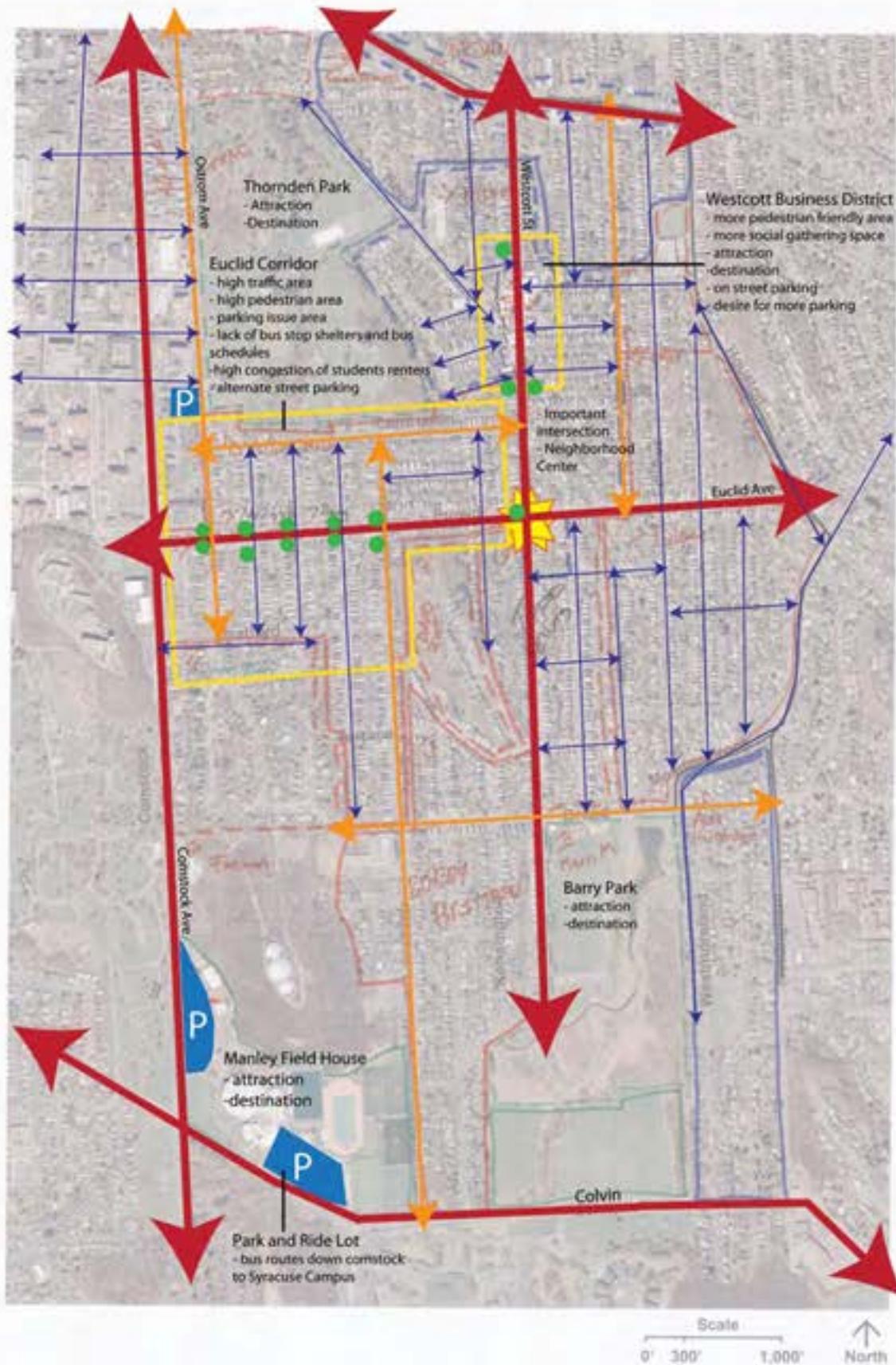
- Encourage universities to provide satellite lots and encourage the use of park and ride, carpooling and public transportation programs so that excessive burden is not placed on the surrounding neighborhood.

### Encourage students to leave their cars at home

- Encourage walking by providing wide, level sidewalks that are free of snow, ice and water in all seasons; clearly marked crosswalks; and adequate support elements such as benches, trash cans and street lighting.
- Encourage bicycling by developing a program that loans or rents bicycles; providing bike lanes that are clear of snow, ice and debris and on which riders feel safe; providing adequate support elements such as bike racks; providing places on campus for riders to change or shower. Many cities have excellent bike sharing programs, such as Velib in Paris would be good to look into.
- Encourage bus riding by marketing the bus system as a cheap, environmentally friendly and easy to use mode of transport; providing adequate support elements such as enclosed bus shelters; and improving visibility of bus schedules and routes.
- Reduce the fear of being stranded by providing a free shuttle service and/or a car sharing program for emergencies and infrequent errands. Zipcar, WeCar and Ucar are all reputable car sharing programs.
- Provide incentives such as 20 free hours of Zipcar use or a free semester-long bike loan for students who agree to leave their car at home.

### Discourage increases in housing density

- The neighborhood can currently only support an average 4 cars per apartment or home and our studies show that this is below (but near) the point of saturation. Adding more houses or rental units within the study area, or increasing the occupant density of each home or apartment would throw this balance off.



### Goals and Action Strategies:

Retain and enhance the traditional physical characteristics of the neighborhood which define its image including the style, scale and detail of the housing stock; the density, setback and structure of the residential blocks; and the neighborhood gateways and primary circulation routes.

- Develop alternative design strategies that illustrate different approaches to neighborhood gateways and circulation routes to review with the Community

Encourage a reduced reliance on cars and mitigate their negative impacts on the neighborhood.

- Prepare a comprehensive University Neighborhood street plan that documents existing conditions and proposed improvements to the sidewalk, open space, and street environment.

- As a part of the University Neighborhood street plan, coordinate with the City of Syracuse to investigate the feasibility of making modifications to Euclid/Westcott Street corridors to calm traffic and to create a multi-modal corridor that is utilized by vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Promote the perception and reality of the University Neighborhood as a safe place to live and visit.

- Prepare a study to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular safety on the same multi-modal corridor.

### Analysis Legend



### Existing Characteristics

#### Primary Streets:

- not conducive for alternative modes of transportation
- walking is difficult
  - poor sidewalk conditions
    - repairs
    - snow removal
    - trash
- strong desire for bike lane travel
  - streets are too congested for safe bike travel
- major axis through site (Euclid/Westcott)

#### Secondary Streets:

- no alternate modes of transportation
  - no bus routes
- congested on-street parking
  - homes do not have enough off-street parking to support the number of residents
- moderately high vehicular/pedestrian use
  - possible option for other bus routes to make the buses a viable transportation system

### Desired Conditions and Characteristics

#### Walking:

- clear and attractive walkways
- lack of obstacles
- caution lights
- trash cans
- easy access to proximity locations
- snow removal
- safety

#### Vehicles:

- more accessible on-street parking
- no charge for meters
- parking near important destinations
- implemented park and ride system
- promote reduced use of cars

#### Buses:

- affordable rates
- more routes
- frequent bus stops
- variety of shuttles
- better schedules
- more shelters
- bus schedules clearly posted
- direct routes

#### Biking:

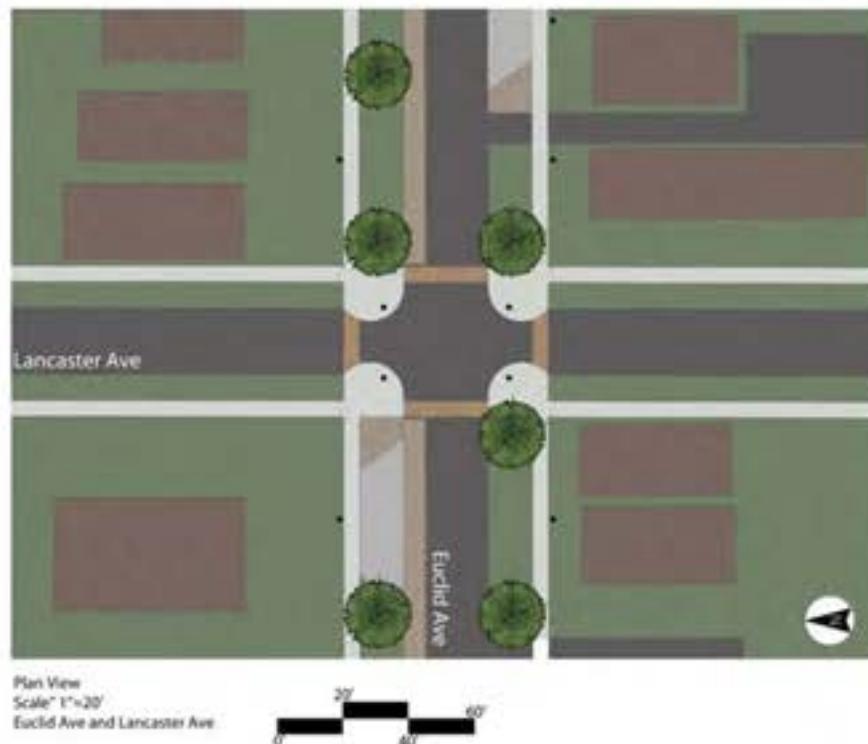
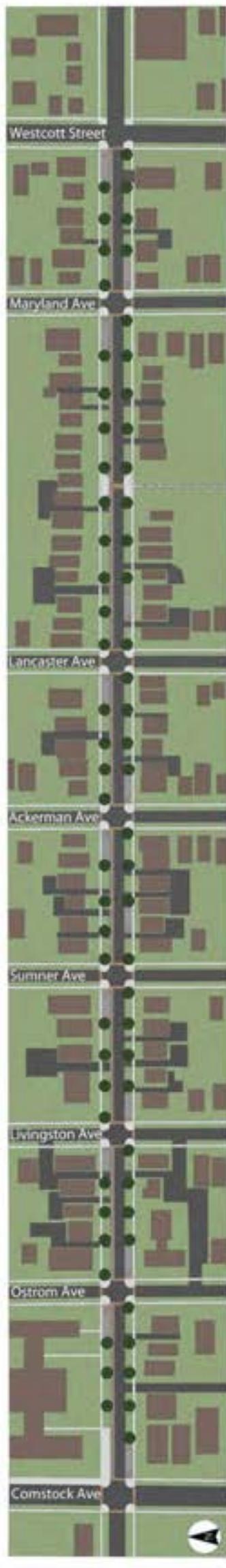
- bike lanes present, clearly marked, and maintained
- signage
- bike racks at destinations to promote biking
- bike path network
- safety

### Key Attractions related to Circulation/Movement:

- Thornden/Berry Parks
- SU/ESF Campuses
- Ed Smith School and Sumner School
- South campus/Manley Field House

### Areas of Concern:

- Syracuse and SUNY ESF student rental area
- Westcott Business District

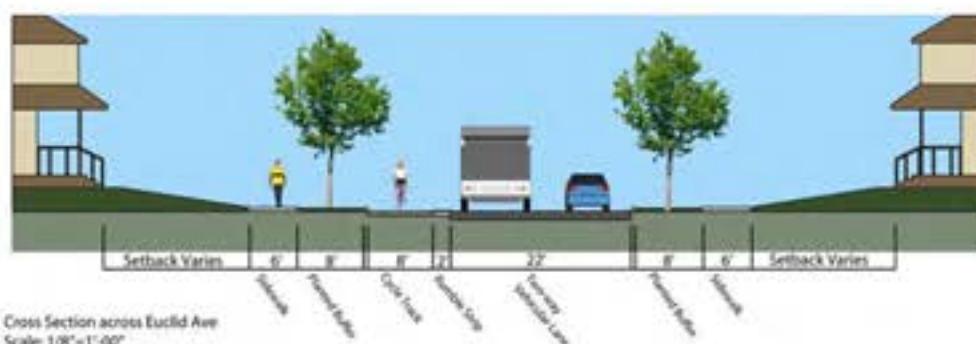


This Design Strategy is driven by one of the main goals developed for the Housing Plan: To encourage a reduced reliance on cars and mitigate their negative impacts on the neighborhood.

This design promotes walking and bicycling. We did precedent research to see various ways to promote biking. One idea which we saw and thought would make the most sense was that of the cycle track.

A cycle track is a two way bike lane that is roughly eight feet across. The concept of a cycle track is to allow bicyclists to be separate from vehicular traffic. Through various design implementations such as, pavement markings, coloring, banding, bollards and curbs, the separation can be quite visible. If implemented correctly it can be a very effective and safe design strategy to encourage bicycling and reduce reliance on the automobile.

Another design strategy that was put into this design was the taking all the on-street parking off of the Euclid Avenue Corridor. Through a parking study by student Sarah Moore which was executed on this particular part of the University Neighborhood, it was shown that there is an adequate amount of parking elsewhere in the area for residents. Removing parking provides the space for improvements that will make Euclid a safer place for all pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging people to use other modes of transportation and not to rely too heavily on the automobile.



Typical cross section all the way across the Euclid Ave Corridor. Shows the relationship between the house, sidewalk, plant buffer, two way street, and the cycle track.

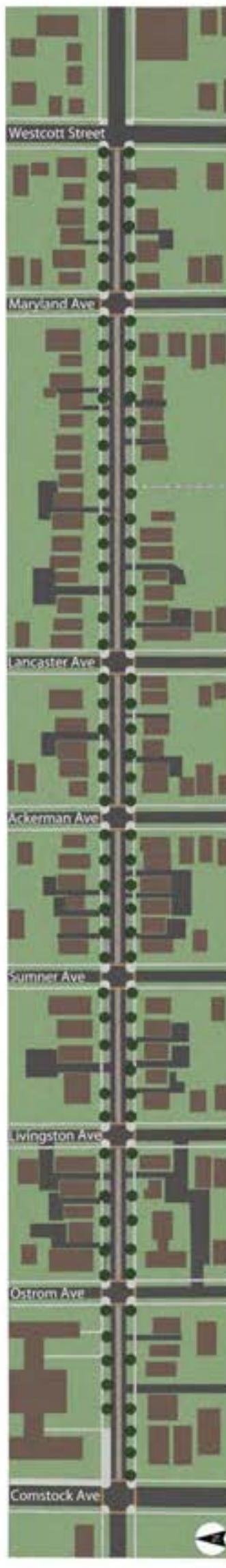
Precedent Research



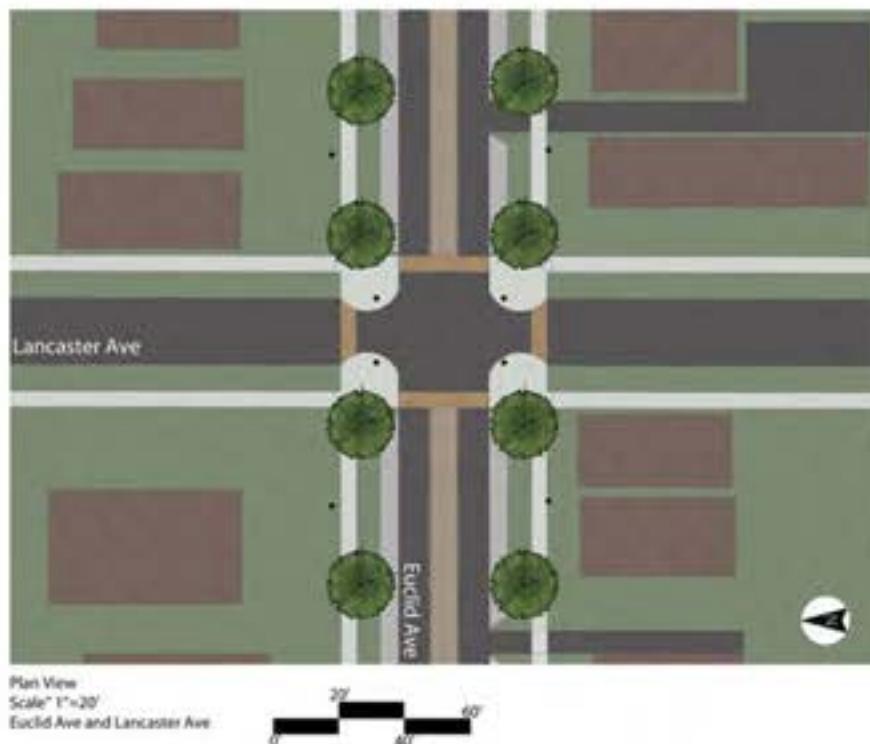
A cycle track is a path system exclusively for bicyclists. It combines the user experience on a separate system while allowing one to obtain the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bike lane. Cycle tracks may be shown in different forms, one way or two way systems. They provide a space which is only intended for bicyclists, it is separate from vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, parking lanes and sidewalks. Pavement markings, coloring, banding, bollards and curbs or all combinations which can distinguish a cycle track lane from other various traffic lanes. There are many different precedent studies that prove this particular design intervention to be a positive and effective solution.



Existing Photo with a Google Sketchup Overlay  
Intersection of Lancaster Ave and Euclid Ave



Plan View of the Euclid Ave Corridor  
Scale 1"=100'-00"  
100'  
0' 200'

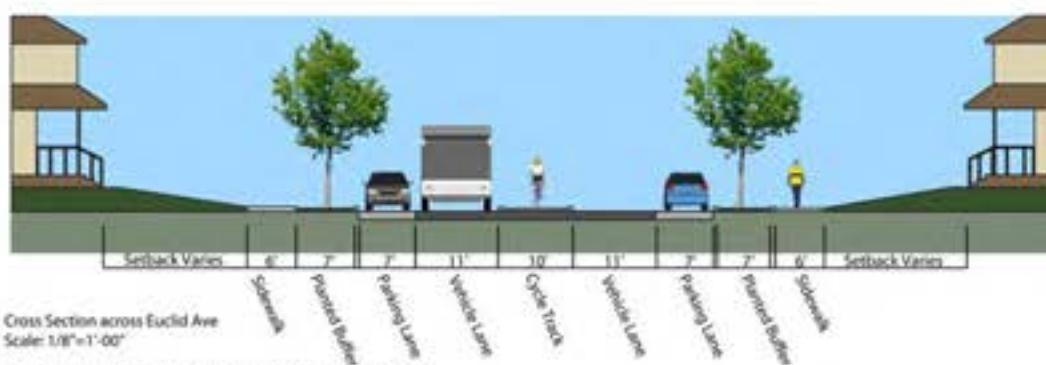


Plan View  
Scale 1"=20'  
Euclid Ave and Lancaster Ave

This Design Strategy is driven by one of the main goals developed for the Housing Plan: To encourage a reduced reliance on cars and mitigate their negative impacts on the neighborhood.

This design scenario utilizes the concept of traffic calming. Through precedent research on traffic calming, we found many different ways to redesign the Euclid corridor. Traffic calming is intended to slow down the vehicular speed in order to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, and to improve the overall environment for the users. By creating narrower intersections, motorists must pay closer attention to their surroundings and slow their speed when going through intersections.

This design has implementations of parking, cycle track, two way traffic as well as pedestrian walkways. This design maintains on-street parking. This design provides bus stop pull-offs after every intersection along the entire corridor, and situates a cycle track in the middle of the street. The cycle track is on a raised path system, which is six inches off the street level. This track is eight feet across, which will still allow for a City pick-up truck to fit on and plow the snow. These changes will make Euclid a safer place for pedestrian and cyclists but also acknowledges the desire for on-street parking for residents and visitors.



Cross Section across Euclid Ave  
Scale: 1/8"=1'-00"

Typical cross section all the way across the Euclid Ave Corridor. Shows the relationship between the house, sidewalk, plant buffer, one way street, and the plant median.

#### Precedent Research



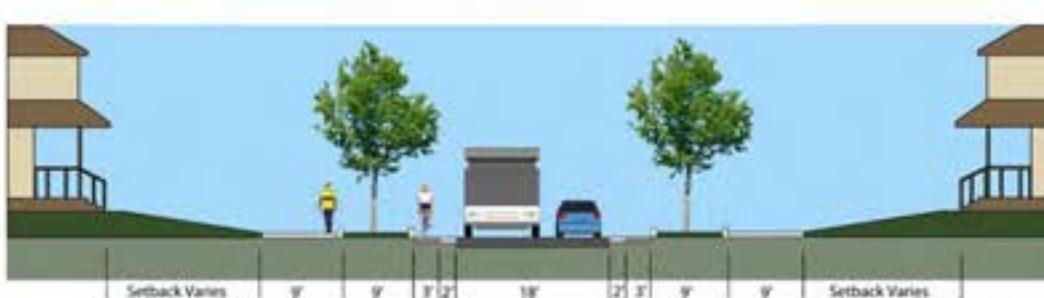
Traffic Calming is intended to slow down or reduce the vehicular speed in order to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists to improve the overall environment for the users. Traffic calming is normally used in regards to pedestrian safety and reduction of noise and local air pollution which are effects of the traffic. On the other hand, for much of the twentieth century, streets were designed by engineers who were charged only with ensuring traffic flow and not with fostering the other functions of streets. The basis for traffic calming is broadening traffic engineering to include designing for these functions.



Google Sketchup Photo Perspective  
Existing Photo with a Google Sketchup Overlay  
Intersection of Lancaster Ave and Euclid Ave



Plan View of the Euclid Ave Corridor  
Scale: 1"=100'-00"  
0 100' 200'



Cross Section across Euclid Ave  
Scale: 1/8"=1'-00"

Typical cross section all the way across the Euclid Ave Corridor:  
Shows the relationship between the house, wide sidewalk, plant strip,  
two-way street, and bike-lane with a buffer zone.



These images show precedent studies of a multi-modal street that gives equal access for bicycles and vehicles. These strategies create a safe environment that supports multiple modes of transportation.



This Design Strategy was driven by one of our main goals developed for the Housing Plan: To encourage a reduced reliance on cars and mitigate their negative impacts on the neighborhood.

This design scenario emphasizes improving the pedestrian uses of Euclid Avenue. Through precedent research we found many possible ways to redesign the Euclid corridor. Traffic calming is intended to slow down vehicular speeds in order to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, and to improve the overall environment and experience for everyone. Traffic calming techniques shown in this scenario include the narrowing of the street and using bright pavement markings to create a buffer zone between vehicle and bicycle traffic. In this design implementation, bicycle users are given priority by designating and providing waiting space ahead of vehicles at stop lights.

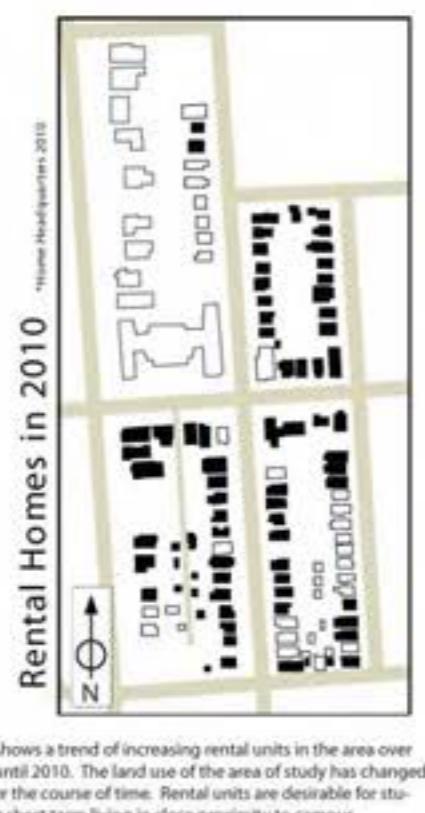
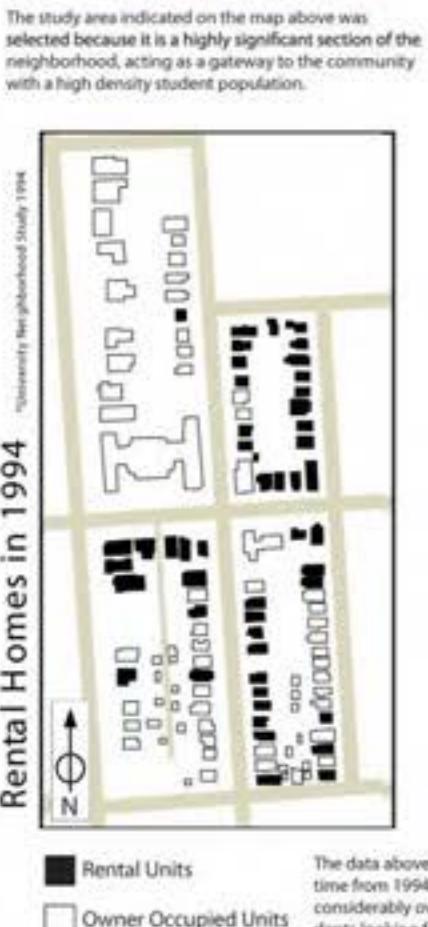
One of the design strategies was to remove on-street parking from Euclid Avenue. Through a parking study done by student Sarah Moore, which was executed on this particular part of the University Neighborhood, it was shown that there is an adequate amount of parking on other streets and off-street parking to support this design strategy. Removing parking provides the space for improvements that will make Euclid a safer place for all pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging people to use other modes of transportation and not to rely too heavily on the automobile.

The designs illustrate a bus stop pullover on every block. The sidewalks have been widened to encourage and accommodate increased pedestrian use. Wide planting stripes between the sidewalk and bicycle lanes will allow for the installation of large canopy trees and other green infrastructure elements for storm water management.

## Inventory Maps



Study Area



Detailed Focus Area



- Single Family Units
- Two Family Units
- Three Family Units
- Apartments and Multi-Residential
- Community Services

The maps above consist of GIS information relevant to the specific study site within the university neighborhood. The map to the left depicts residential land use patterns in the study area, with an emphasis on the high concentration of apartment buildings at the gateway to the University Neighborhood. The map to the right depicts areas classified as community services in the neighborhood. The information for the maps is from Home Headquarters, November 2010.



The map above depicts impervious surfaces in the neighborhood classified as roads, surface parking, and houses. Surface parking consumes a considerable portion of space in the area of study.

## Property Ownership



### Property Ownership Key

- Fraternities and Sororities
- Syracuse University Properties
- Butterfield House
- Family Research Lab
- The Daily Orange
- LGBT Center
- Off-Campus and Commuter Services
- Student Legal Services
- Shaw Hall
- 88.3 FM WAER Haft Hall
- Lyons Hall
- Campus Hill Apartments
- University Area Apartments
- O.P.R. Developers
- Homes Currently For Sale

# Valued Housing Characteristics

## Historically Correct Paint Colors



## Historically Accurate



Shaw Hall - 483 Residents

Campus Hill Apartments - 71 Bedrooms

O.P.R. Developers - 56 Bedrooms

Within each block of the detailed study area, there is a high concentration of properties with a common owner. The collections of commonly owned property are some of the densest in the university neighborhood.

## Study Area Density Map

# Areas of Opportunity and Concern



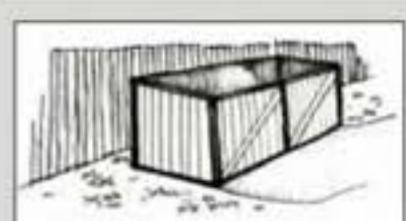
Several out of character additions were applied to the building that is currently operated by O.P.R. The form and materials of the additions have no relation to the rest of the university neighborhood. Poor additions detract from the overall quality of the housing stock.



The back lot of the O.P.R. properties consists of a series of disjointed surface parking lots. There is no common space for tenants to come together as a group.



The bland architectural design creates a lackluster entrance to the O.P.R. properties. Space for automobiles dominates the sites.



Unsightly trash piles visually pollute the properties. A simple fix to this problem would be to construct and maintain attractive trash enclosures.

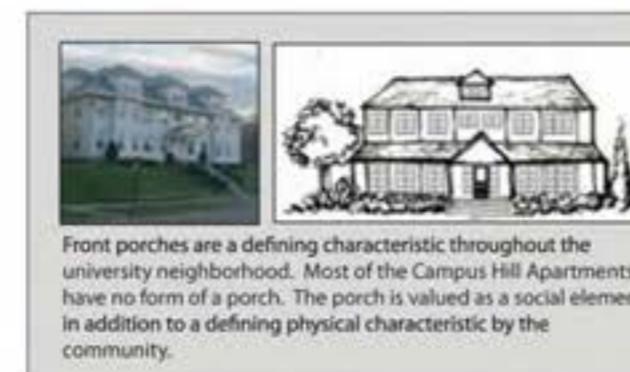


Green space adjacent to Shaw Resident and Dining Hall is highly under utilized. With programming, the space could be used to benefit the high density of residents in the area. Potential uses include outdoor seating, community gardens, and sculpture parks.

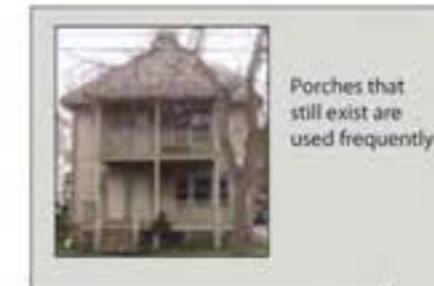
Area of historical significance - Syracuse New Times founded on this corner by a student in 1969.



The Campus Hill Apartments rentals provide an inefficient parking system requiring tenants to park three cars deep. This is a poor use of space and requires a constant shuffling of vehicles. The locations of some parking lots are dangerously close to busy roads.



Front porches are a defining characteristic throughout the university neighborhood. Most of the Campus Hill Apartments have no form of a porch. The porch is valued as a social element in addition to a defining physical characteristic by the community.



Porches that still exist are used frequently.



## Appendix 3 - Third Stage Process and Results

Third Stage Process and Results

Neighborhood Analysis Presentation

Neighborhood Analysis Process Posters

### **Appendix 3: Third Stage Process and Results**

The third stage of the planning process delved in greater depth into demographic and housing ownership data, and the changes that have occurred in the neighborhood over the past 20 or more years. This work was accomplished by the CCDR with the Advisory Committee during the summer and fall of 2011. The results of this data collection, documentation and analysis contributed to the development of many of the specific action strategies associated with the goals to provide a mix of housing choices in the neighborhood, strengthen the characteristics that support a high quality of life, and promote dialogue and strong partnerships with the academic institutions..

The primary sources of data were the US Census Bureau, GIS data from Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse and Home Headquarters, and data from the *University Neighborhood Strategy* (prepared by the ESF Landscape Architecture Urban Design Studio in 1994, under the direction of George Curry and Christine Capella Peters). Quantitative data and trends in institutional enrollment, neighborhood population, and ownership were analyzed separately and then in combination with the qualitative data provided through the community workshops. The data and the analysis were presented and discussed with the Advisory Committee in August and September 2011. This powerpoint presentation with notes is included in this appendix.

During the third stage the CCDR worked with Eric Greenfield, UNPA's Board President, to create the University/Westcott Neighborhood *Housing and Market Strategy Diagram* that outlines recommendations for housing, market focus and ownership options in different areas of the neighborhood. These general recommendations are based in large measure on location in relation to major neighborhood attractors and destinations, size of home and age of home. The graphic analysis that led up to the recommendations in the diagram is included in this appendix.

# **University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan**

**Data Analysis documentation for Advisory Committee**  
**September 29, 2011**

- Contained in this document are the data that was presented to the Advisory Committee on August 11, 2011. The GIS maps and some other information have been updated.
- Full size versions of the GIS maps are inserted after the pages that contain small versions and notes.

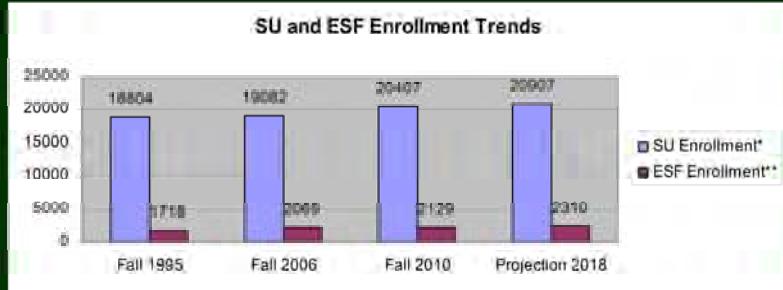
**CC** SUNY ESF Center for Community  
**DR** Design Research

## Context and Setting

- Influence of Syracuse University and the other academic institutions, including SUNY ESF
- City population trends

- The “University Neighborhood Strategy” prepared in 1994 by SUNY ESF’s Urban Design Studio, focused primarily on the development of the neighborhood over the decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the development patterns and architectural styles.
- As part of our process we have also researched the social history of the neighborhood through document review and interviews.
- The influences that seem to loom large are Syracuse University and the general trend of population movement for the city to the suburbs.
- Both influences are multi-faceted and complex – and total understanding of their impact and potential resolution are beyond the scope of this study.
- However, the definition and accomplishment of a shared vision for the neighborhood must acknowledge and court these influences, especially the academic institutions, because the health of the neighborhood both impacts and is impacted by them.

## Enrollment trends – 1995 to 2010



- SU enrollment rise 1995-2010: 1600 students (1325 since 2006)
- ESF enrollment rise 1995 - 2010: 400 students
- Total enrollment rise 1995 – 2010 : 2000 +/- students
- Projected enrollment rise to 2018: 600-700 students

Notes: ESF enrollment for 2010 does not include 587 part time undergrads most of which are high school students enrolled in ESF in the High School courses.

SU enrollment data obtained from IPEDS and projections from email correspondence with Don Saitch, VP-Enrollment Management. ESF 1995 data obtained from SUNY report on 1995 and 2002 enrollments; 2006 data from College Portrait report, 2010 data from college website and projections from email correspondence with Bob French, VP Enrollment Management and Marketing.

- Since the 1950's Syracuse University has been through periods of incredible growth followed by retrenchment.
- In the past 15 years, the SU and ESF have been experiencing growth.
- ESF projects essentially no growth in enrollment over the next 5 to 10 years.
- SU's director of enrollment provided the following information:
  - "Our target number for freshmen will grow from 3,350 to 3,400 over the next 3 years.
  - This year, we had a total of 3,380 freshmen (current estimate)
  - Our transfer target will grow from 378 to 500 over the next 4 years
  - The target for new students in the Spring will grow from 160 to 200 over the same period
  - Accounting for attrition, we should see about 350 more students.
  - This should be offset some by increases in the number of students who study abroad.
  - Finally, we do expect to see our graduation rate increase. This should mean about 200 more students are on campus."
  - Given this somewhat circular information, the CCDR has projected an increase in enrollment of approximately 500 students.

## University Housing

- 2007 to present – first new housing associated with SU/ESF in 40 years
  - ESF Centennial Hall 452 beds (ESF)
  - Ernie Davis Hall 250 beds (SU)
  - Park Point Syracuse Housing 88 beds, AY11-12) 226 beds (private developer) SU
  - University Village Housing 100 beds, AY 11-12) 430 beds (private developer) SU  
1358 beds
- Temporary SU Housing AY 2011-12
  - Parkview Hotel 72 beds
  - Sheraton Hotel 66 beds
  - 138 beds
- Other Campus Housing 7895 beds (from SU Housing website)
- **Total Univ. related Housing 9391 beds**

Notes: Information on SU and ESF housing obtained from institutions websites

- Until Ernie Davis Hall, SU had not built any substantial new housing for students since the 1960's
- New housing may have been in response to concerns expressed by neighbors
- The private housing developments - Park Point and University village - are market driven. According to the Department of Facilities Planning, the University was approached by those developers to build student oriented housing – and developers will not develop without pretty good certainty that the units will be attractive and will rent
- It is expensive in comparison to neighborhood housing – \$850 – \$900/month versus average of \$375/month per bedroom in neighborhood housing (figure derived from taking an average price of rooms for rent through Orange Housing website in spring 2011).
- In academic year 2011-2012, SU Housing has reserved a specific number of beds in the developer housing and in the Sheraton and Parkview hotels to cover their required housing needs without resorting to housing students in lounge areas
- In other words, SU is at absolute capacity with the on-campus housing it has available for those students that it requires to live on campus – ie freshman and sophomores not living at home within commuting distance

## **New housing not yet keeping up with recent rise in enrollment**

- Enrollment rise (1995 – 2010): 2000 students
- New Housing built or available: 1496 beds

## **Even when additional planned housing is built, there will continue to be demand for student housing in the neighborhood**

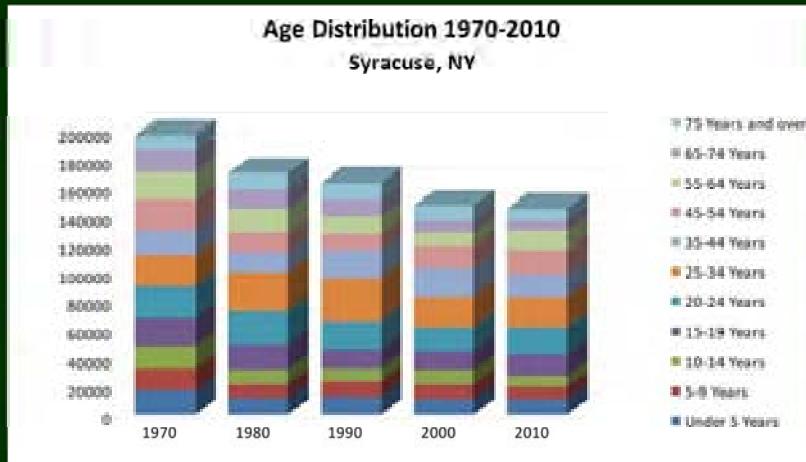
- Currently planned
  - West Campus MP private 800\* beds (312 under construction – developer)
  - Armory@ E. Genesee 133\*\* beds (private developer) 933 beds

\* number from SU Facility Planning West Campus Master Plan

\*\* number from Post Standard article

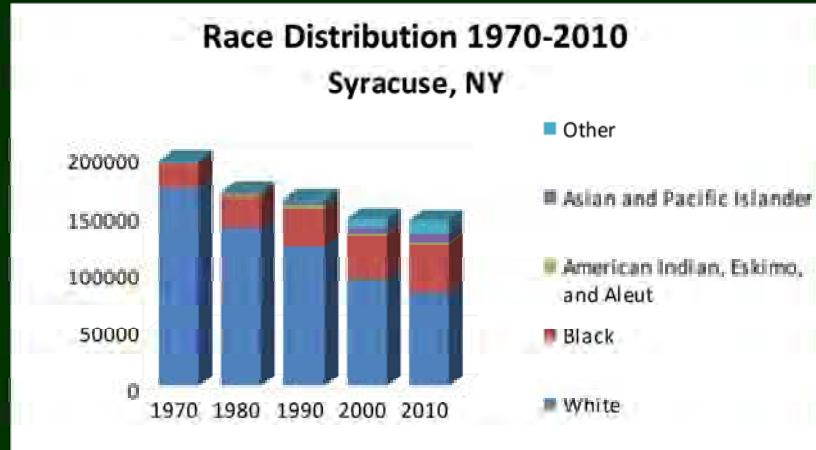
- There has been some concern expressed during the course of the planning process that with the construction of student related housing by SU, ESF and private developers, there would be a drop in demand for student rental housing in the neighborhood.
- Based on the enrollment rise in the last 15 years, and the projected increase in enrollment over the next 6 to 8 years, it appears that the demand for off campus student housing in the neighborhood will continue, even with the new housing that is currently planned or under construction.

## City of Syracuse population trends – total population and age distribution



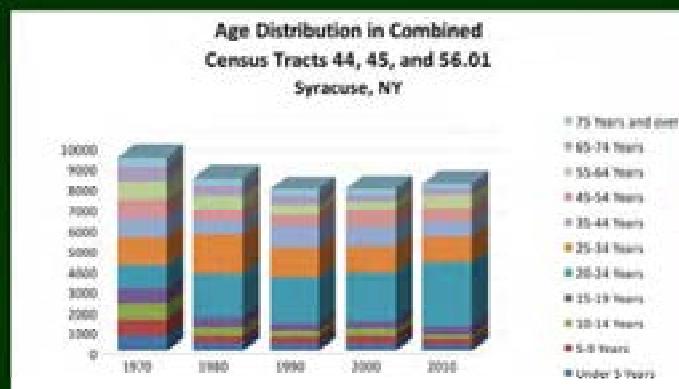
- Other influence that we need to understand is what has been happening to the city population over the past 50 years
- Marked decline in population between 1970 and 2000 of about 60,000 or 30%. Between 2000 and 2010 there has been just a slight decline.
- Note fairly even distribution of age groups in 1970, with some bulges in middle ages as baby boomers move through.

## City of Syracuse population trends – Race



- While the City Population has stabilized somewhat over the past 10 years, the trend continues to be movement of white residents out of the city.
- Population stability has come from an increase of refugees according to a recent article in the Post Standard,

## Neighborhood Population Trends – total population and age distribution



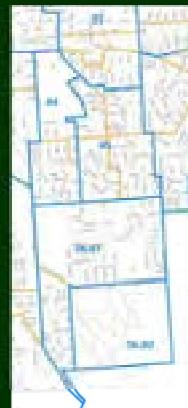
Note: Census tract data does not correspond completely with study area boundary. Study area includes all of Tracts 44 and 45. It includes most of Tract 56.01 but a portion of that tract extends beyond the neighborhood into Outer Cornstock. Not shown in this data is Tract 35 block 4 which encompasses the northern part of the neighborhood. In addition possible differences in tract boundaries from 1970 to 1980 need to be verified.

- Overall population in CT's 44, 45 and 56.01 have declined from 1970 to 2000; although between 1990 and 2010 there has been a slight increase.
- There was a fairly even population age distribution in 1970. Between 1970 and 1980 there was a significant decrease in neighborhood population of about 1000 people but also a big increase in the percentage of young adults 20 to 24's and 25 to 34's. The proportion of the 20 to 24 years olds has continued to increase, the 25 to 34 year olds have remained fairly stable.
- Most of the other age ranges have declined (except for the baby boomers who are continuing to move through the demographic system). There is a continuing decrease in school age children and middle age adults (35 to 44 year olds).
- Population has become less diverse with a much higher than average percentage of undergraduate age residents.

## Neighborhood population trends – Race

### Combined Census Tracts 44, 45, 56.01

56.01



Note: Census tract data does not correspond completely with study area boundary. Study area includes all of Tracts 44 and 45. It includes most of Tract 56.01 but a portion of that tract extends beyond the neighborhood into Outer Comstock. Not shown in this data is Tract 35 block 4 which encompasses the northern part of the neighborhood. In addition possible differences in tract boundaries from 1970 to 1980 need to be verified.

- Contrary to city trends, the white population continues to be the highest percentage of residents and has remained steady between 2000 and 2010.
- After increasing between 1990 and 2000, the black population declined slightly between 2000 and 2010.
- There has been an increase in the Asian and Pacific Islander population group (most likely the former).
- The trend in race composition is different from the overall city, where the white population is declining and the black population is increasing.
- This data illustrates that the neighborhood is not as racially diverse as residents might project. However not represented in the census data is diversity of different ethnic groups and nationalities present in the student as well as permanent population.

## 1990, 2000, 2010, Block Group Population Trends

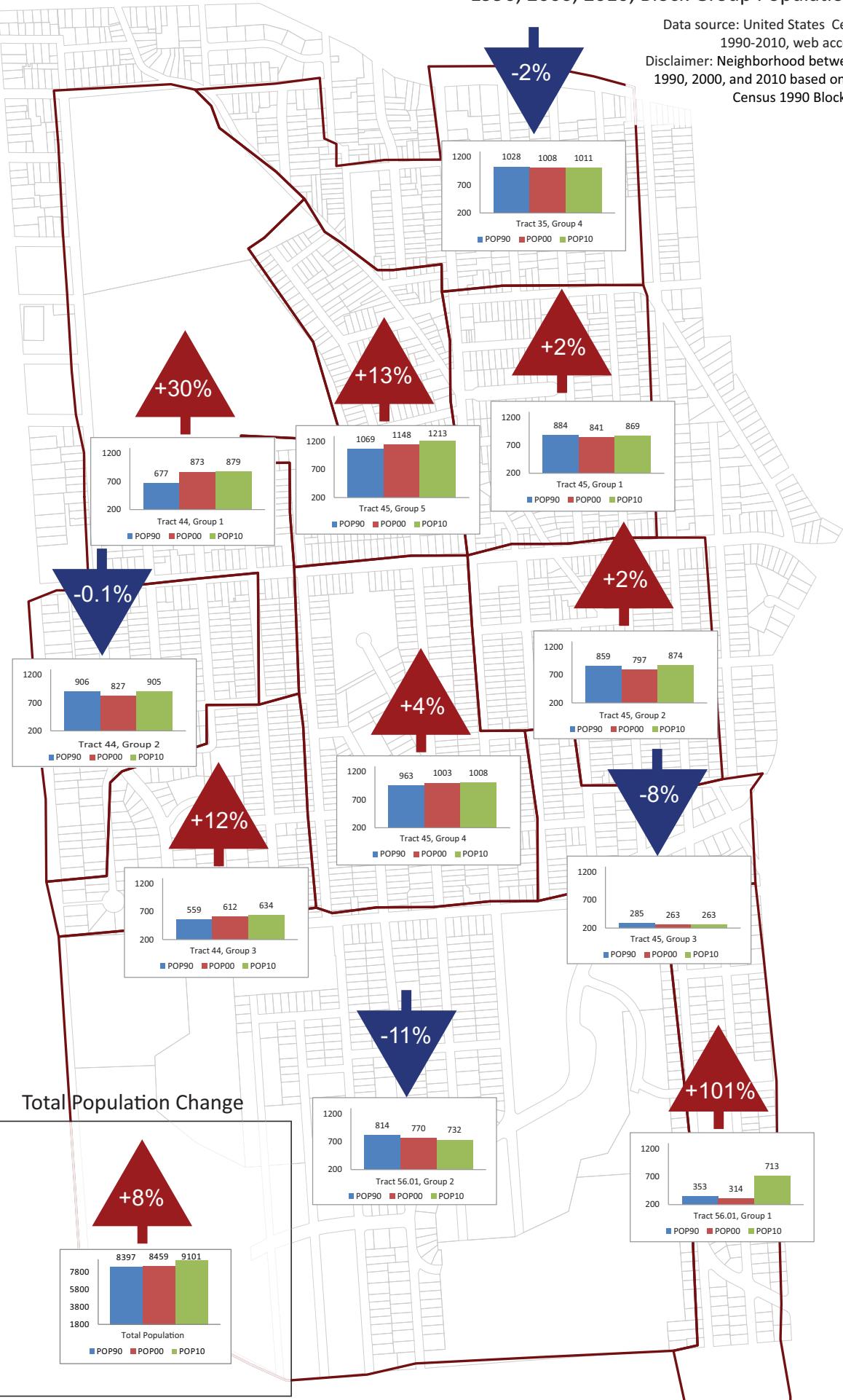
Data source: United States Census Bureau

1990-2010, web access July 2011

Disclaimer: Neighborhood between the years

1990, 2000, and 2010 based on original U.S.

Census 1990 Block Group data.



Map Prepared for: University Neighborhood / Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan

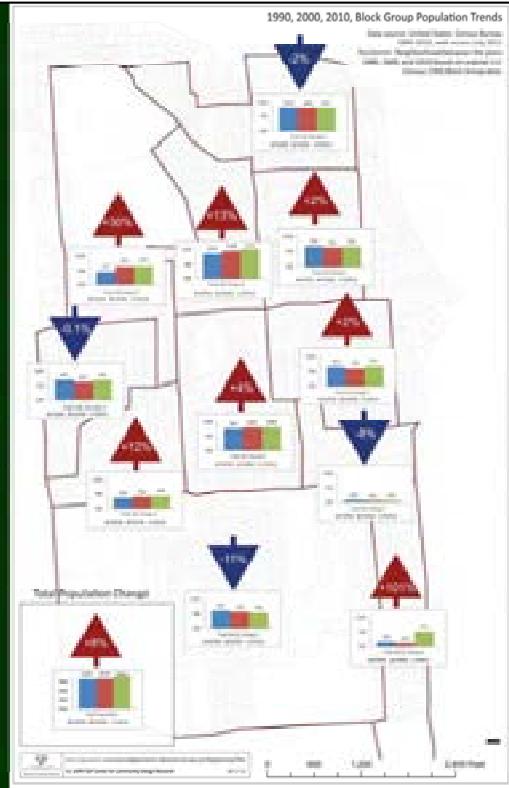
By: SUNY-ESF Center for Community Design Research

08-17-11

0 600 1,200 2,400 Feet

## Population by block group

- Total Neighborhood Population
  - 1990: 8397
  - 2000: 8459
  - 2010: 9101



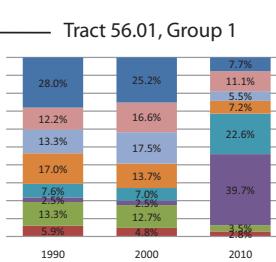
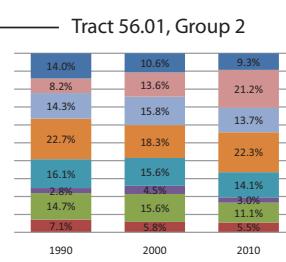
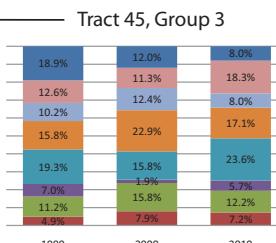
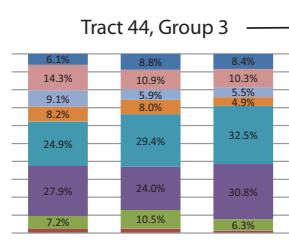
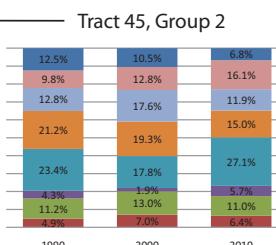
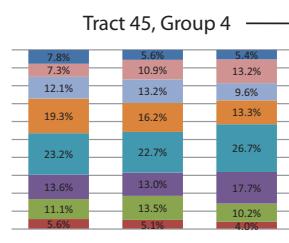
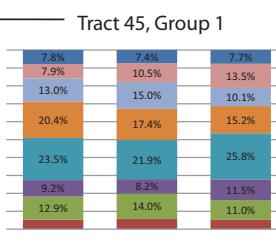
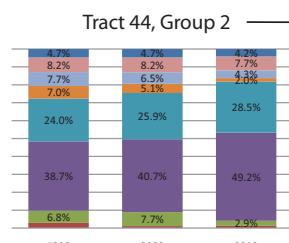
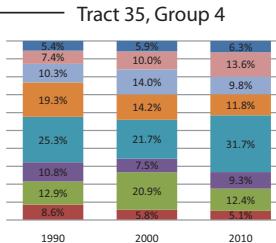
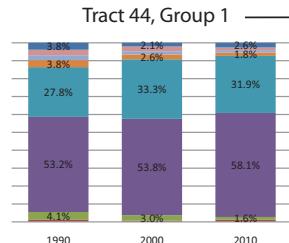
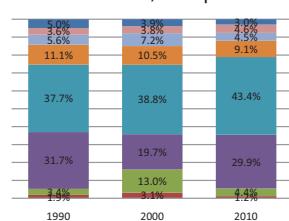
- The block data was available for 1990, 2000 and 2010.
- The large arrows on this poster represent the percent change in population from 1990 to 2010. The overall population in the neighborhood has increased by approximately 700 people between 1990 and 2010.
- High percent increase is in CT 44 group1, with increase of about 200 people, or 30%.
  - Given the other data, it is probably safe to assume that most of this increase is in off campus student population
- Highest percent increase in CT 56.01 group 1 in Sherman Park area. This may be due to inclusion in this block of the new University Village Housing, a private development which can house 430 students.
- Also increases in CT 44, group 3, and CT 45, group 5
- Note the 11% decrease in CT 56.01, group 2 below Broad, and 8% decrease in CT 45, group 3, both areas in the southeastern part of the neighborhood, furthest from the academic campuses.
- There is relative stability comparing population between 1990 and 2010 in ct 44, group 2 which includes a portion of Berkeley Park but which also has a significant number of student renter occupied properties south of Euclid Between Comstock and Ackerman. For some reason however, there was a decline in population represented in the 2000 census figures which then recovered in 2010.

## Block Group Age Range Comparison

Data source: United States Census Bureau 1990-2010, web access July 2011

Disclaimer: Neighborhood between the years 1990, 2000, and 2010 based on original U.S. Census 1990 Block Group data. Tract 56.01, Group 1 boundary has changed throughout the three separate Census years in this study. In

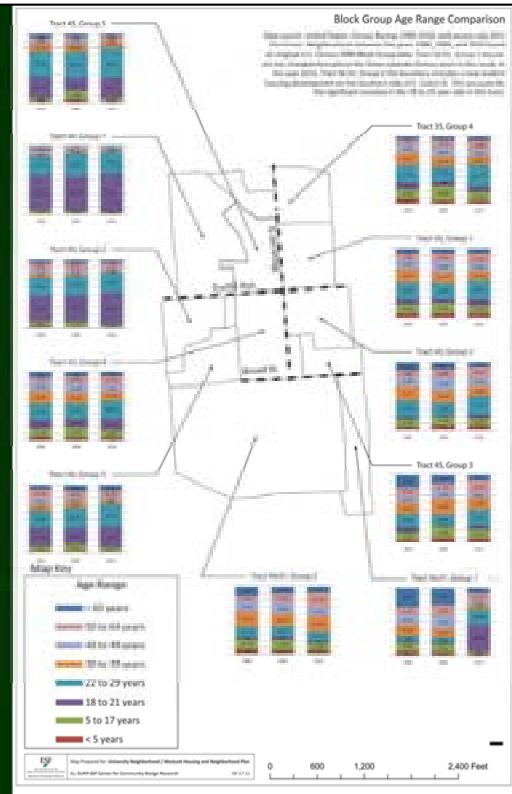
the year 2010, Tract 56.01, Group 1 the boundary includes a new student housing development on the Southern side of E. Colvin St. This accounts for the significant increase in the 18 to 21 year olds in this tract.



### Map Key

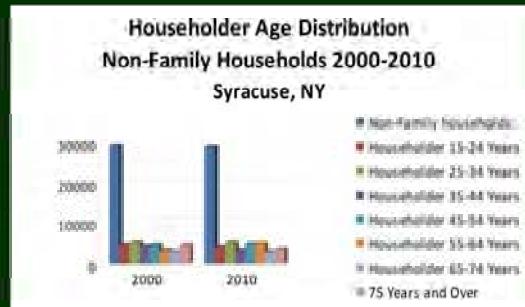
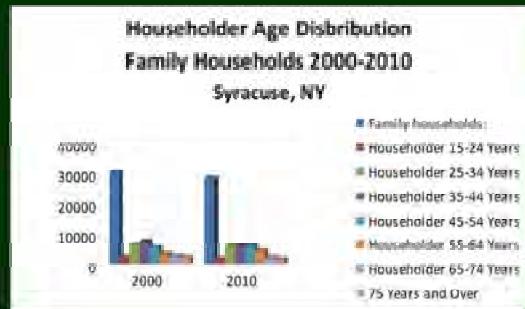


## Age of population by block group



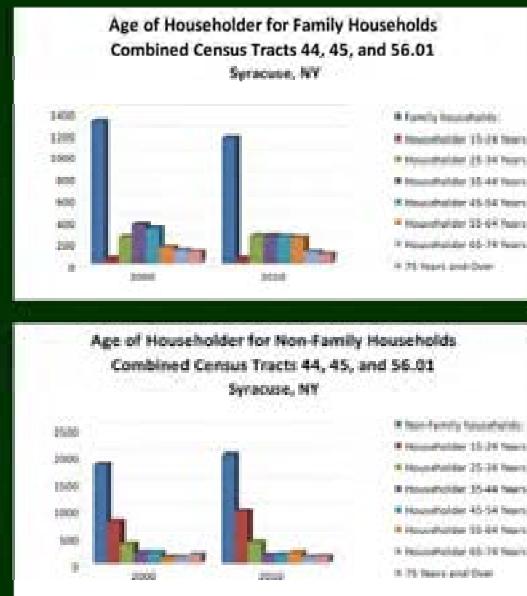
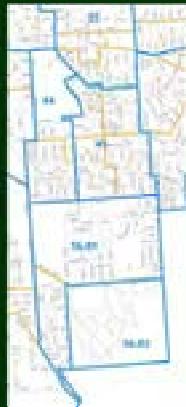
- These graphs illustrate the relative proportion of population within each block by age.
- There is a pattern of high proportion of student age population, represented by purple and turquoise close to campus.
- There is a more even distribution of ages further east in the neighborhood. There are very low percentages of undergraduate age residents in the blocks in the southeast section of the neighborhood, with slightly higher in the northeast section of the neighborhood.
- The impact of the construction of the University Village Apartments on the proportion of college student age residents in Tract 56.01, Group 1 is significant.

## Age of Householder – City of Syracuse



- Householder age indicates the age of the person identified as the head of the household.
- City of Syracuse data is illustrated on this slide. Top image is for family households; bottom image is for non-family households.
- Tall columns represents total number of households
- The total number of family households has declined while the non-family households has stayed about the same.
- There is a fairly even distribution of non-family householder age ranges, with the biggest change appearing in the 55 to 64 year old range.

## Age of householder: CT 44, 45, 56.01

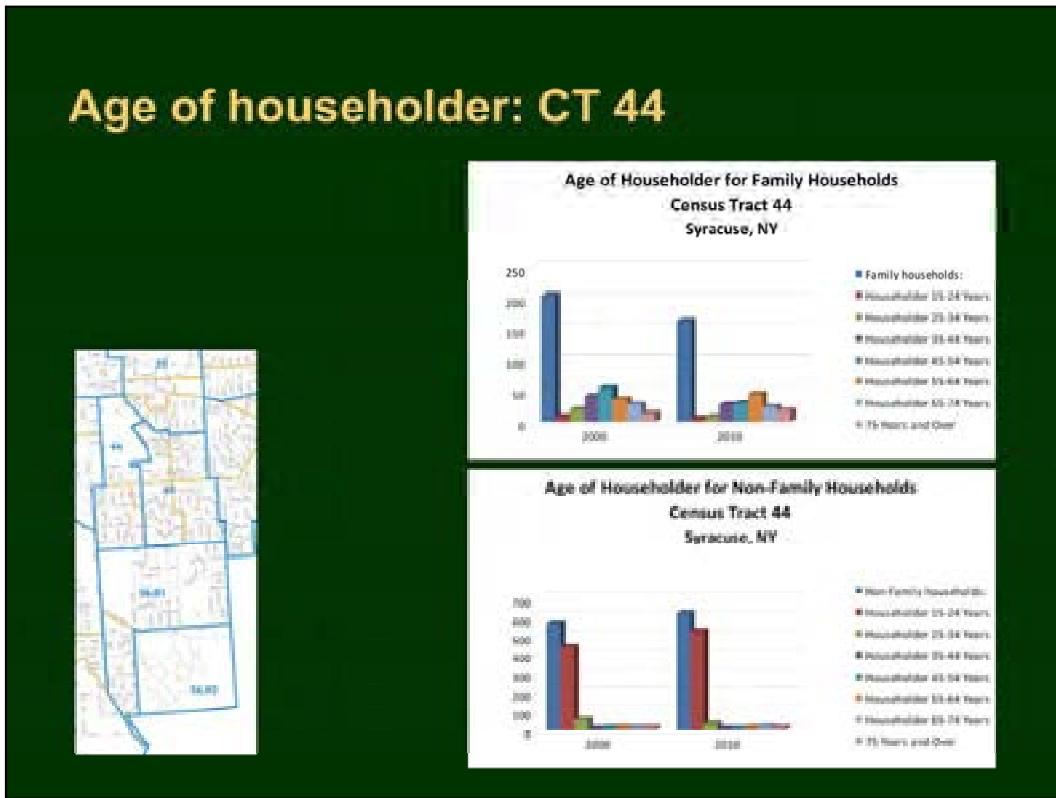


- This slide shows households and head of householder data at the census tract level in the neighborhood.

- Two patterns of interest:

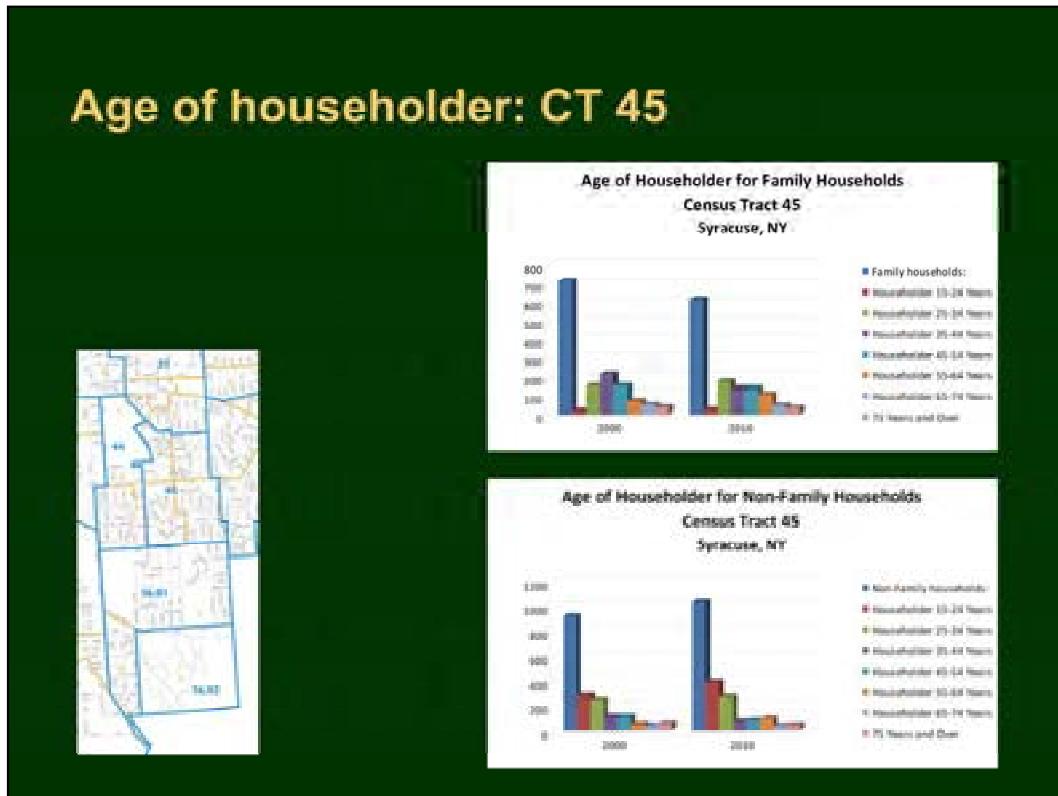
- Number of family households is declining while the number of non-family households is increasing
- And for non-family households, the highest proportion of householders are in the 15 to 24 year old range, and that proportion has increased in the past 10 years.
- Distribution by individual census tract is shown in the next several slides.

## Age of householder: CT 44



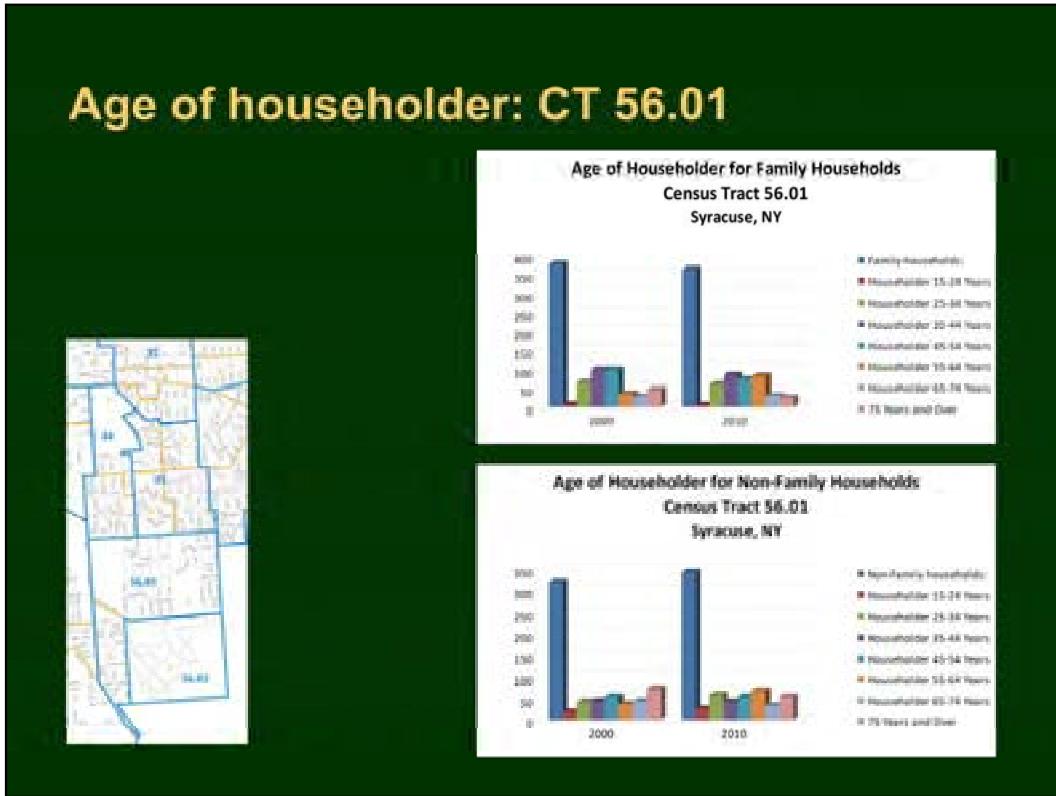
- In CT 44, closest to the SU campus, there has been a slight increase of households from 776 in 2000 to 789 in 2010.
  - The proportion family households declined from 206 (27%) to 164 (21%).
  - The non-family households increased from 570 (73%) to 625 (79%).
- Striking in this CT are the very high percentage of non-family households with householders in the 15 to 24 year range. For non family households, this age group increased from 77% in 2000 to 84%.

## Age of householder: CT 45



- CT 45 has also seen a decrease in family households and an increase in non-family households.
- There is a significant drop in the family householder in the age group of 35 to 44 year olds, from 219 in 2000 to 140 in 2010, an age range most likely to have school age children
- Within non-family households CT 45 has more of a mix in the age of householders than CT 44, including a higher proportion of young adults 25 to 34 years old.
  - The number of householders in the 15 to 24 year old range has risen, from 290 in 2000 to 399 in 2010.
  - non-family Householders 25 to 34 has risen from 254 to 287
  - non-family Householders 55 to 64 years old has risen from 53 to 103 which may be attributable to the aging baby boomers.

## Age of householder: CT 56.01



- In CT 56.01 there are more family households than non-family households, but the latter has increased between 2000 and 2010.
- However there is a more diverse distribution of householder ages with both family and non-family households.

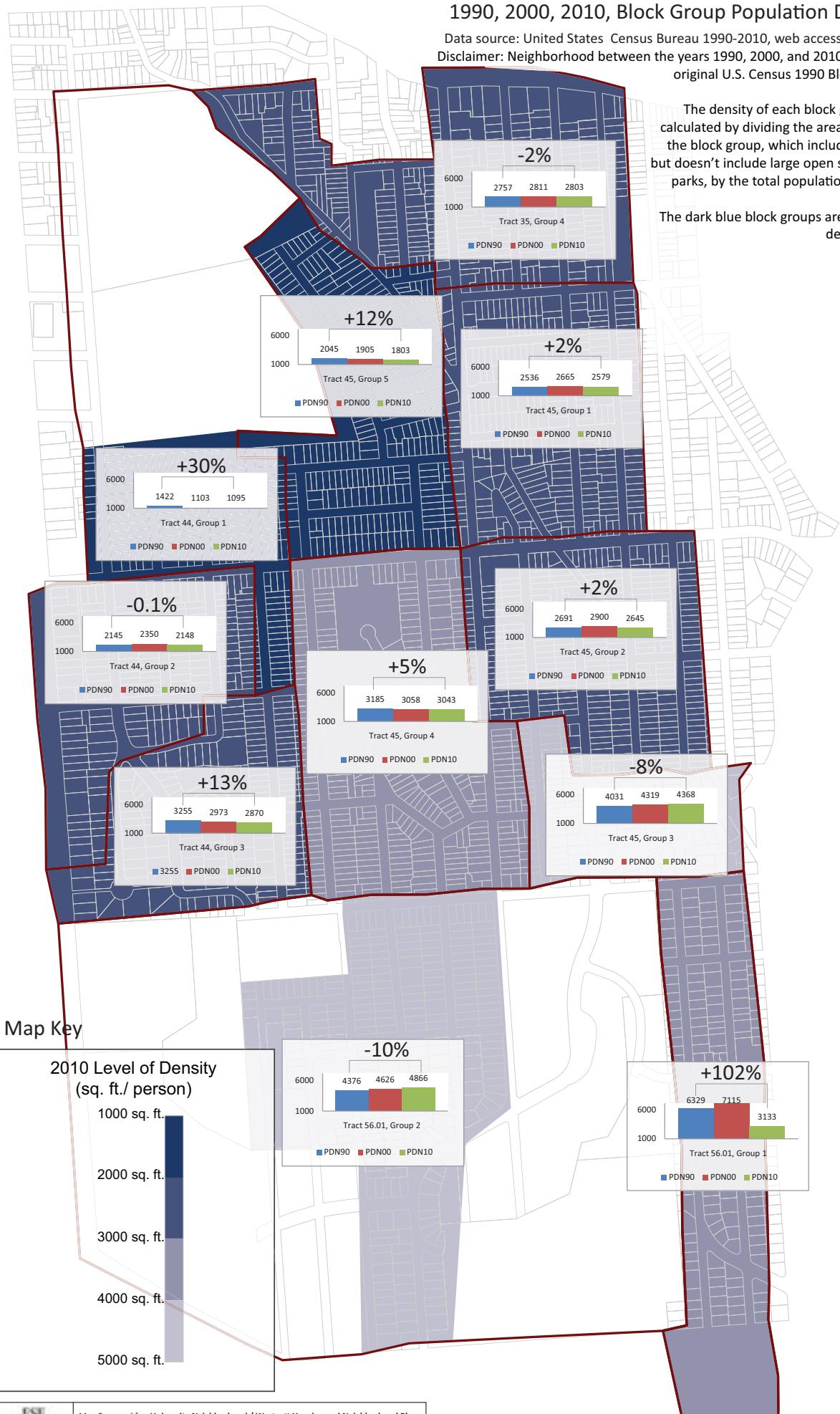
## 1990, 2000, 2010, Block Group Population Density

Data source: United States Census Bureau 1990-2010, web access July 2011

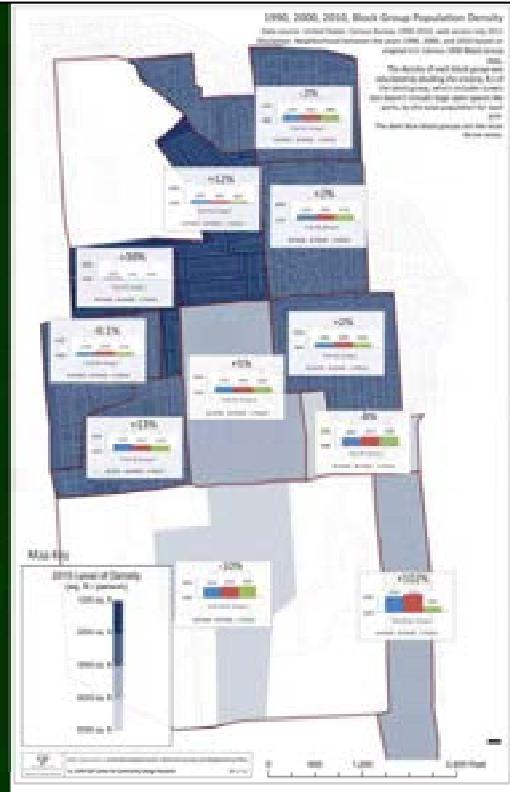
Disclaimer: Neighborhood between the years 1990, 2000, and 2010 based on original U.S. Census 1990 Block Group data.

The density of each block group was calculated by dividing the area(sq. ft.) of the block group, which includes streets but doesn't include large open spaces like parks, by the total population for each year.

The dark blue block groups are the most dense areas.

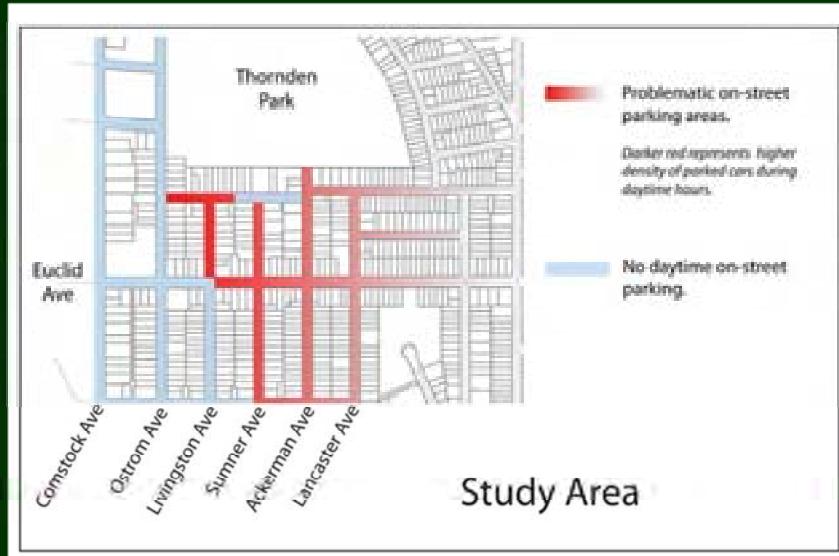


## Density



- Population density has increased in last 30 years in most of the block areas, corresponding to increase in population
- Density is calculated in square feet per person and is a relative number
- Reinforces results of community forums and AC members that density has been increasing.
- Highest increase in density are in blocks closest to campus, except CT 44 , group 2 which has had slight decline in population and essentially no change in density
- Density also increases the number of cars in the area and the demands on the infrastructure

## Parking intensity



- Highest amount of demand for parking occurs in some of the highest density areas
- Eliminating commuter parking and encouraging students not to have cars may help alleviate or mitigate problems the problems of increased number of cars associated with increased density.

## 1994 Non-Owner Occupied Homes

Data source: Urban Design Studio, 1994 SUNY-ESF

Disclaimer: The original map source data was collected from City of Syracuse 1993, Syracuse University Registrars Office 1994, and SUNY-ESF Registrars Office 1994 and annotated by hand by the Urban Design Studio.



## Non-owner occupancy - 1994



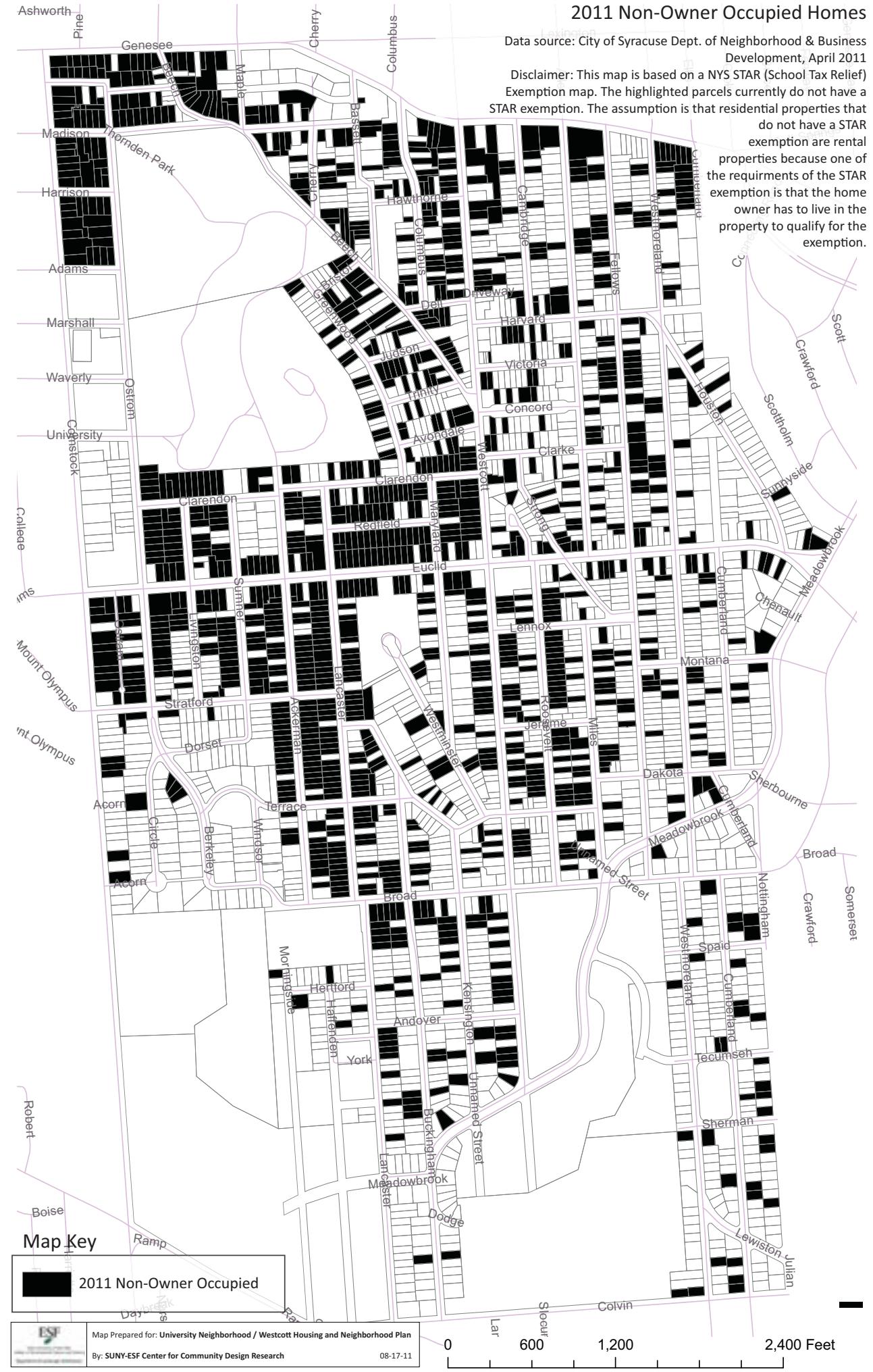
- Data for non-owner occupied properties in 1994 was taken from data documented in the University Neighborhood Plan prepared by the Urban Design Studio in 1994, under the direction of Chris Capella Peters and George Curry. According to them the original data probably came from water bill information.

## 2011 Non-Owner Occupied Homes

Data source: City of Syracuse Dept. of Neighborhood & Business

Development, April 2011

Disclaimer: This map is based on a NYS STAR (School Tax Relief) Exemption map. The highlighted parcels currently do not have a STAR exemption. The assumption is that residential properties that do not have a STAR exemption are rental properties because one of the requirements of the STAR exemption is that the home owner has to live in the property to qualify for the exemption.



## Non-owner occupancy - 2011

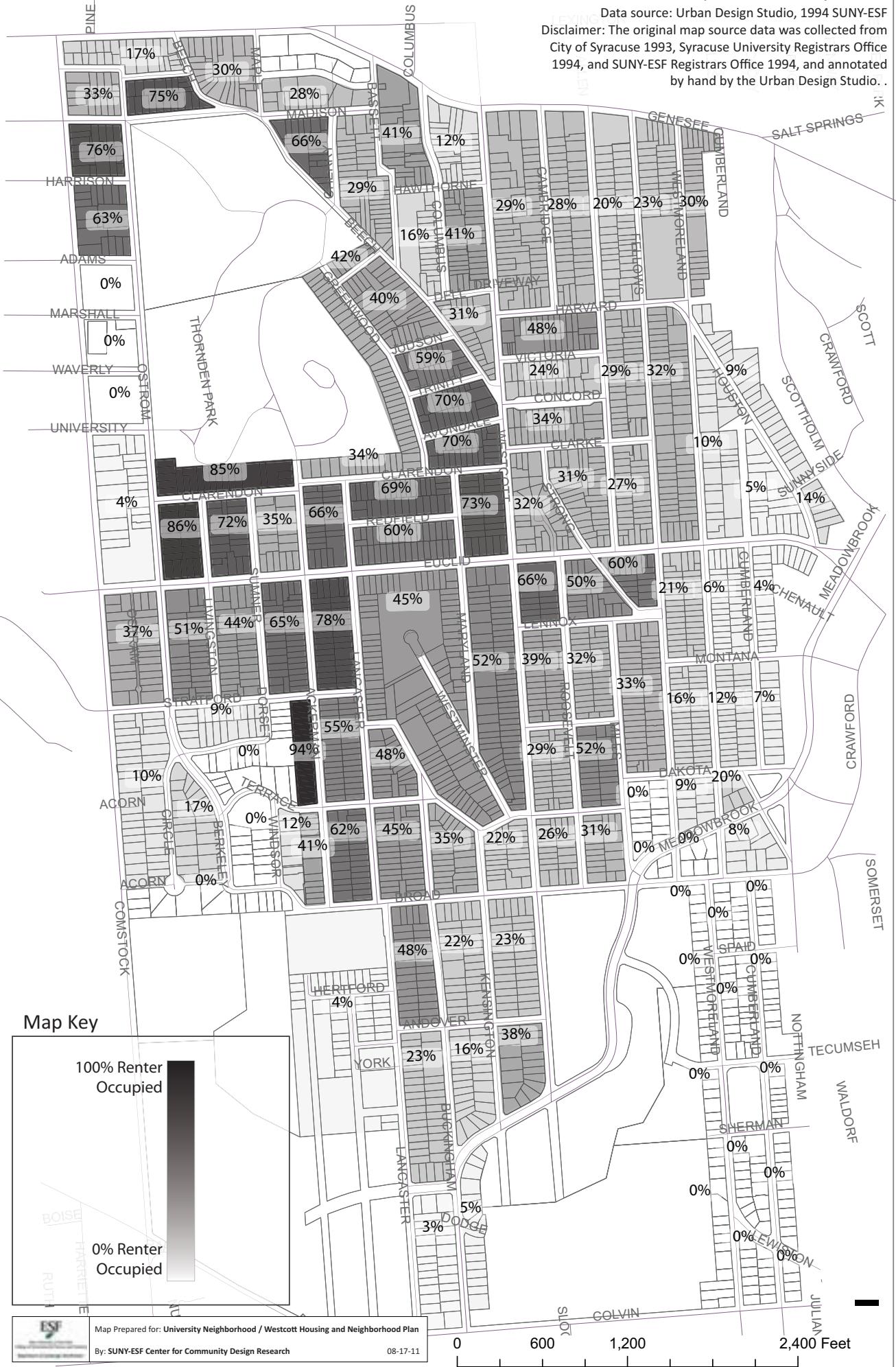


- The data for the non-owner occupied properties were derived from using STAR tax exemption data provided by the city. This exemption was only available for owner-occupied properties, so represented on this map are properties that did not receive a STAR exemption. There may be inaccuracies if owner-occupants did not apply for the exemption.

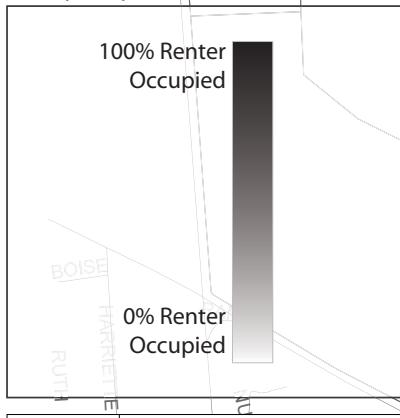
### 1994 Percent of Renter Occupied Homes by Block

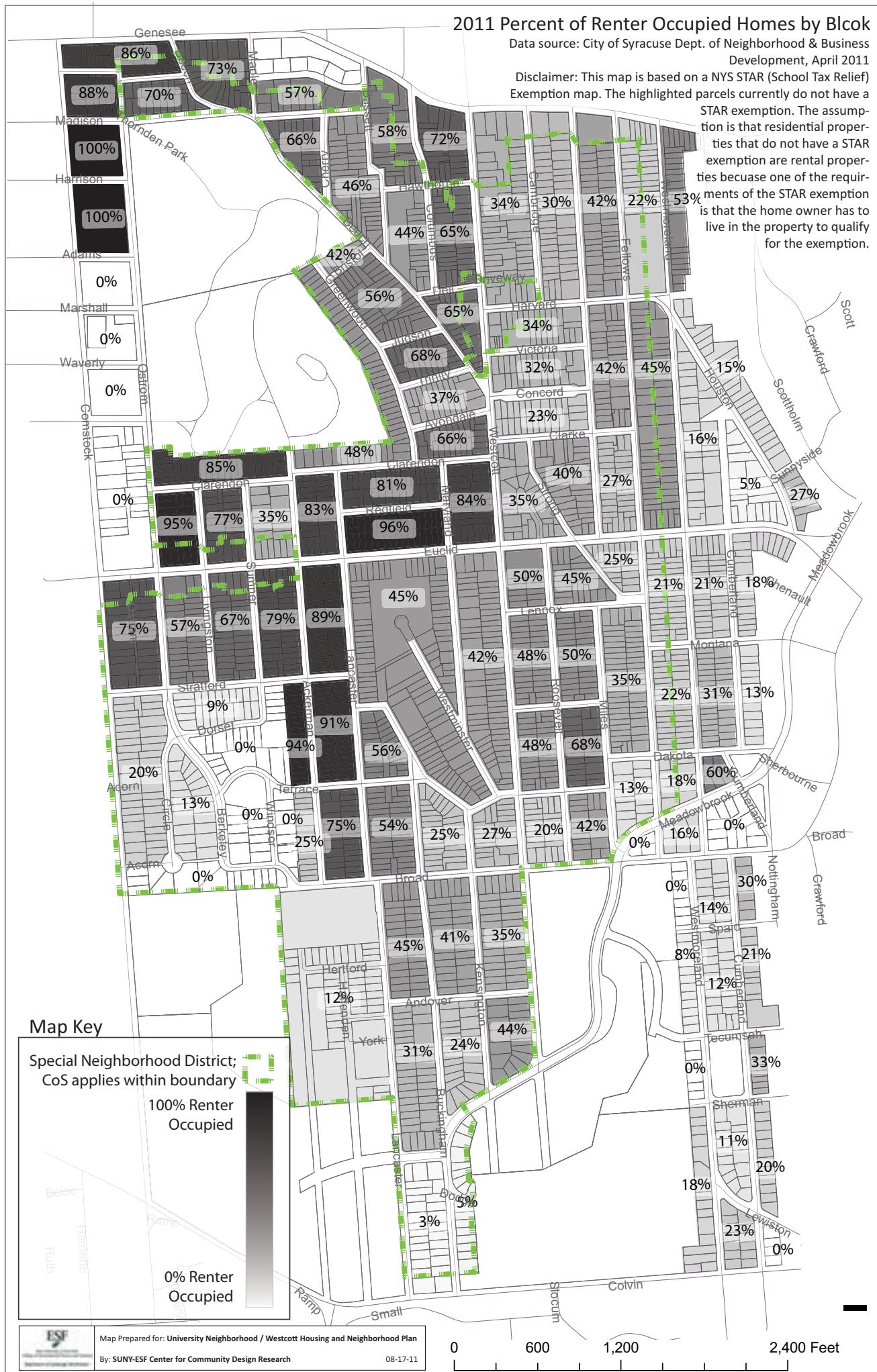
Data source: Urban Design Studio, 1994 SUNY-ESF

Disclaimer: The original map source data was collected from City of Syracuse 1993, Syracuse University Registrars Office 1994, and SUNY-ESF Registrars Office 1994, and annotated by hand by the Urban Design Studio. .



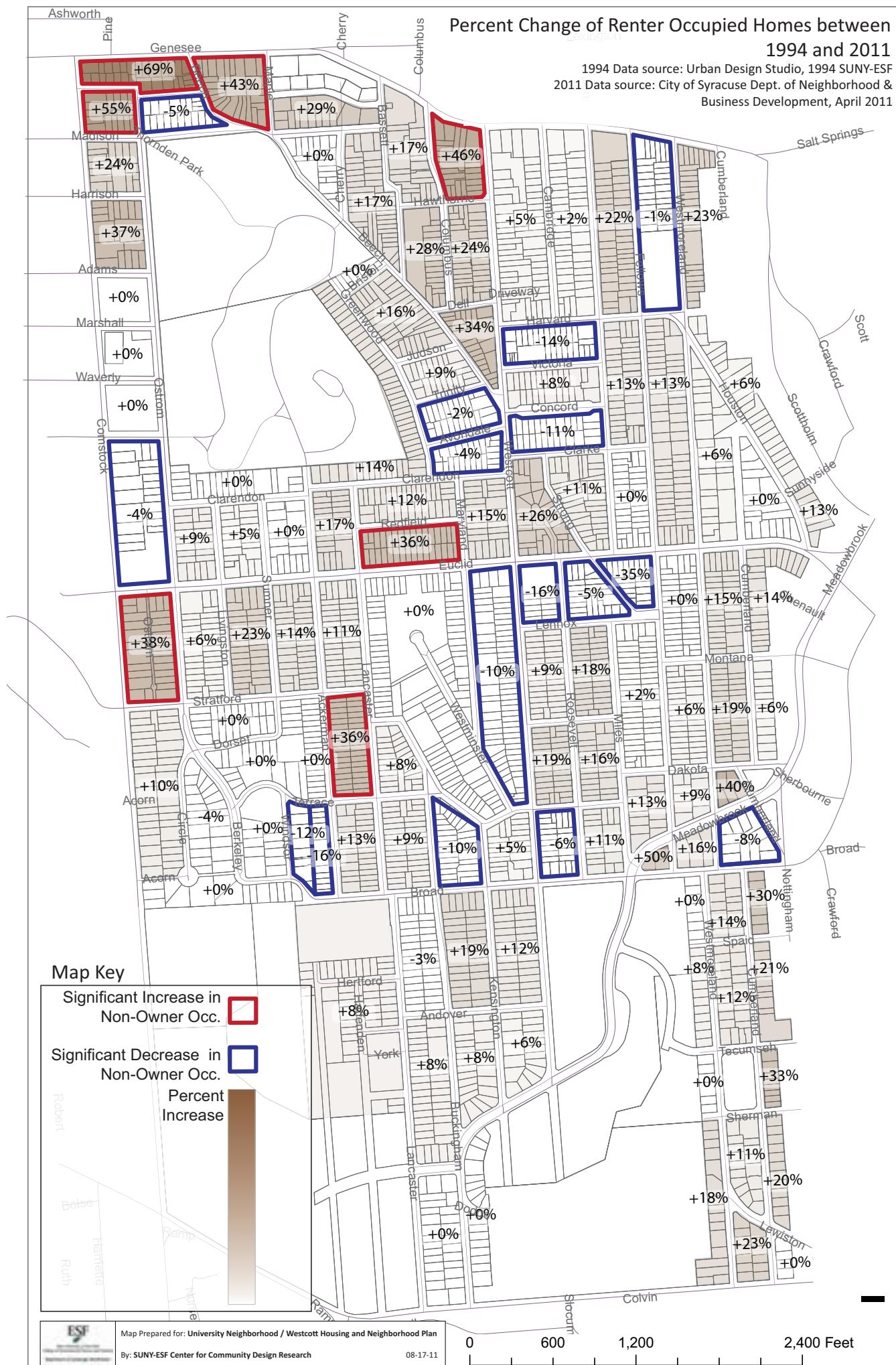
## Map Key



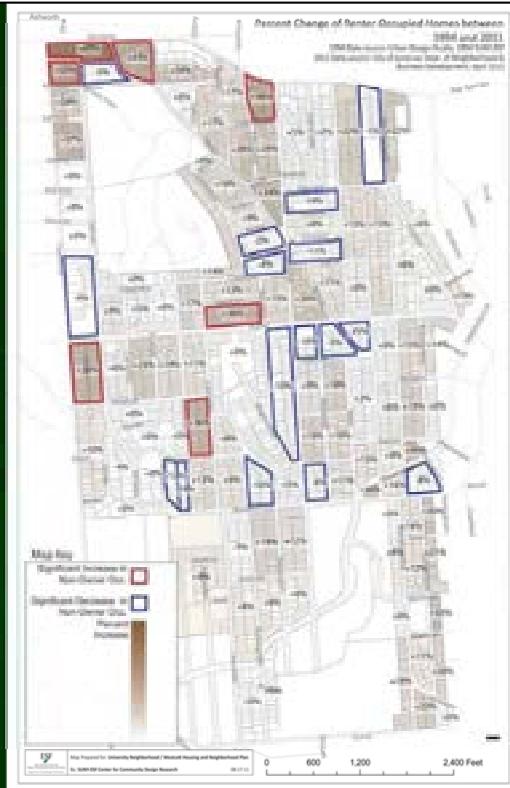




- These maps illustrate the percentage of renter occupied properties by block, with 1994 on the left and 2011 on the right. The darker the tone, the higher the percentage of renter occupied properties.



## Trends in non-owner occupancy

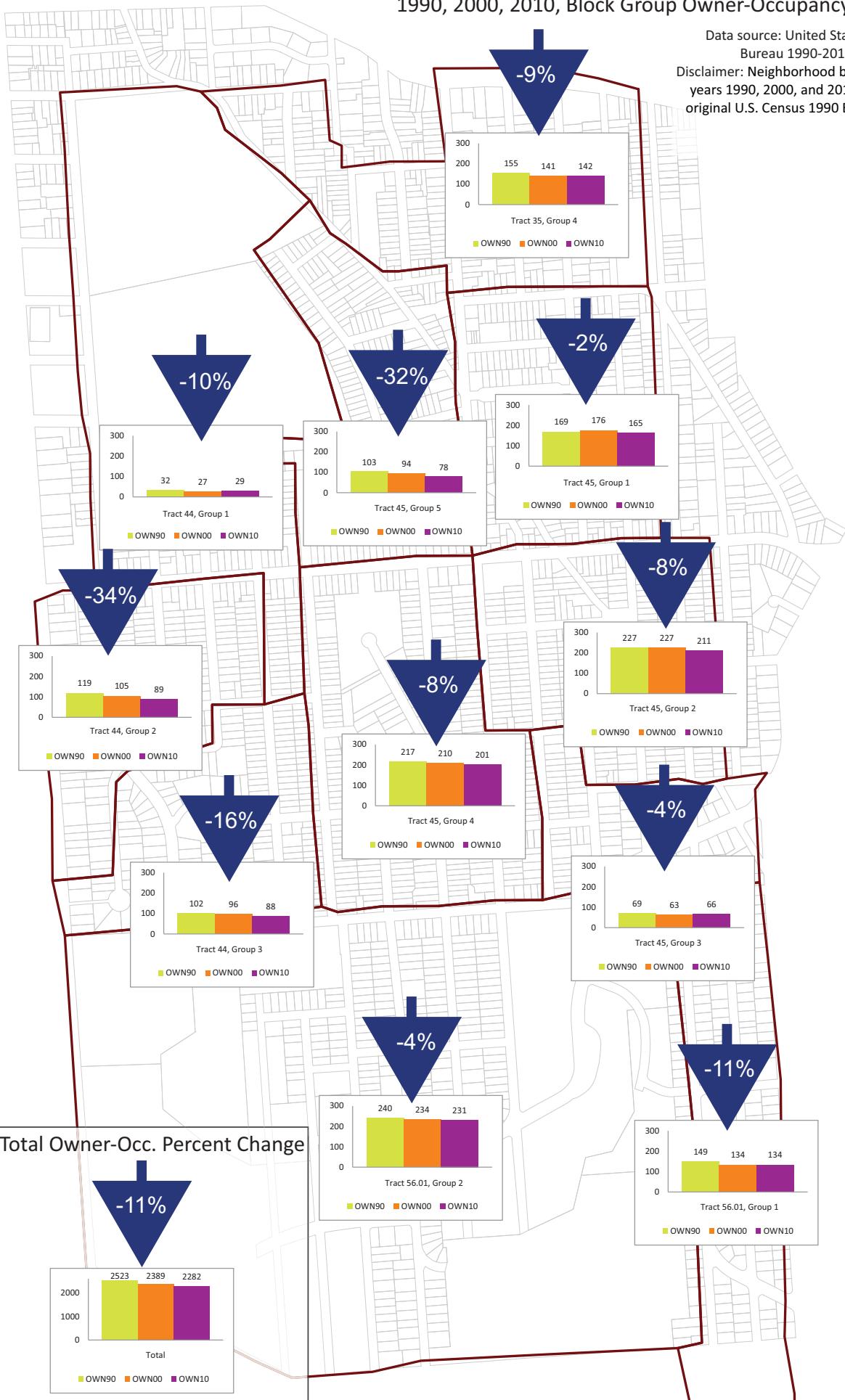


- Map indicates percent change between 1994 and 2011
- Areas of a relatively significant increase to non-owner occupied properties are outlined in red.
- Areas of a relatively significant decrease in non-owner-occupied properties are outlined in blue.
  - In discussions with the project advisory committee it was determined that conversion from non-owner occupied back to owner occupied may have been in response to a decline in the rental market due to SU's decreased enrollment (early to mid 1990's) which made it more affordable to buy investor properties and convert them back to owner-occupied. In particular, homes on Clark, Victoria and Allen Streets have interesting and unique architecture.
  - Significant increase in rental properties along Nottingham Road may be due to decrease in desirability as owner-occupied starter homes fronting on heavily trafficked road.

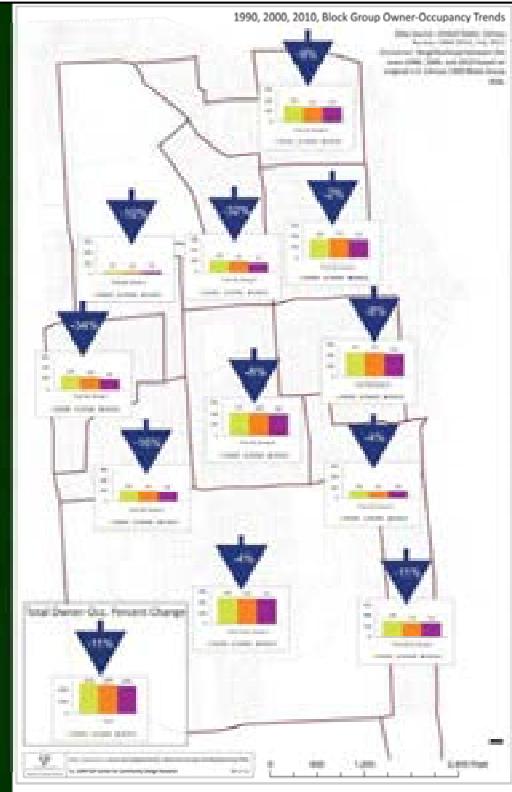
# 1990, 2000, 2010, Block Group Owner-Occupancy Trends

Data source: United States Census Bureau 1990-2010, July 2011

Disclaimer: Neighborhood between the years 1990, 2000, and 2010 based on original U.S. Census 1990 Block Group data.



## Owner occupancy trends 1990 - 2010

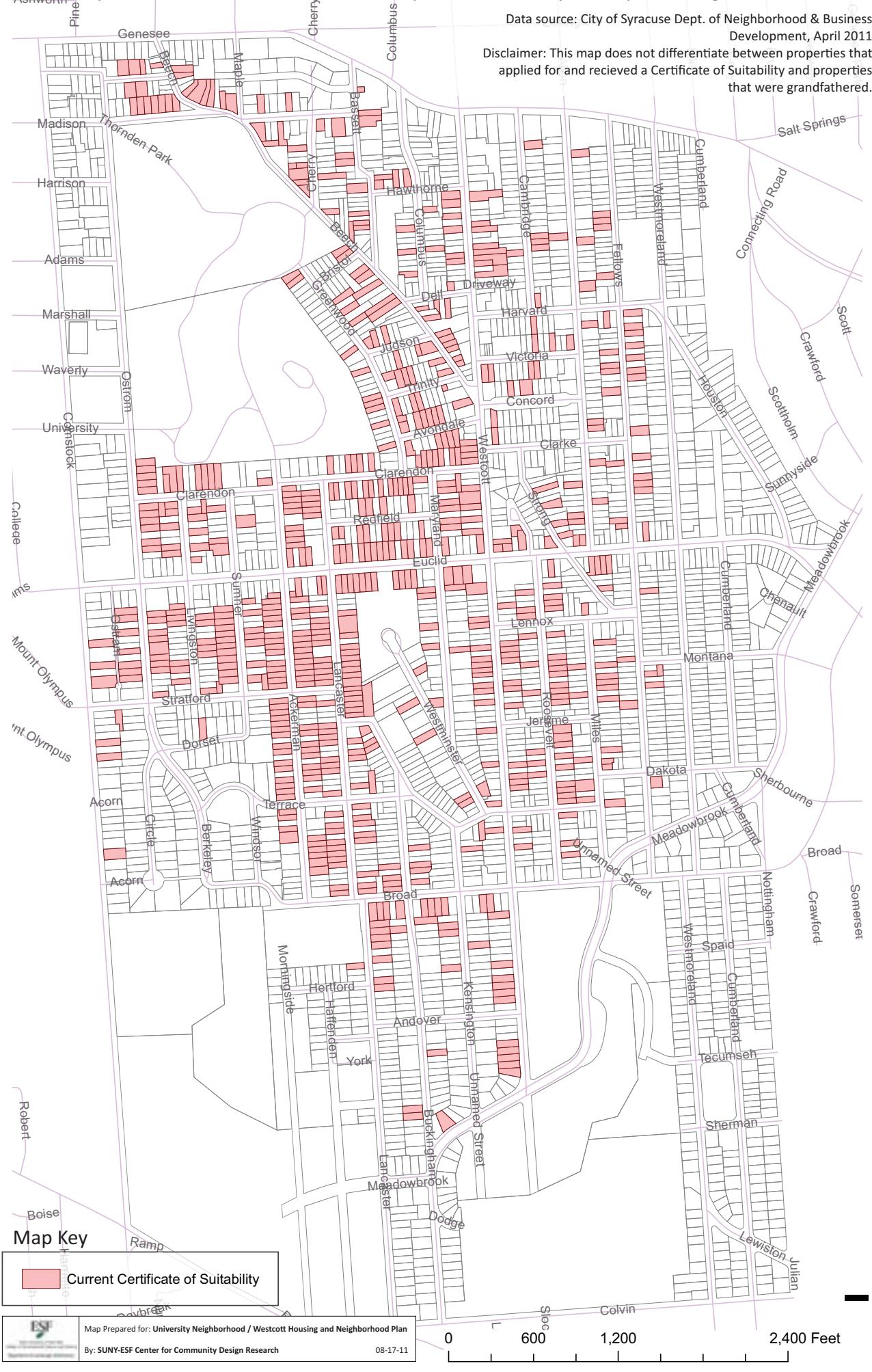


- Shown on this map are the owner-occupancy trends by block group from 1990 to 2010.
- All blocks are showing a decrease owner-occupancy in the time frame, with the most significant change, greater than 30%, in tract 44, group 2, north of Euclid close to campus, and in tract 45 group 5, east of Westcott Street. However, there does not seem to be a clear correlation between the change in ownership as illustrated in the following examples:
  - While there has been a significant decrease of 34% in owner occupied properties in tract 44, group 2, there has been essentially no change in population in that block according to the census data.
  - In tract 44, group 1 just a few additional properties have converted to non-owner occupied in the past 20 years but according to the census data the population has increased 30%, or by over 200 people.
  - In tract 45, group 5, there has been a significant decrease of 32% in owner-occupied houses, the population has risen by about 150 people, or 13%.

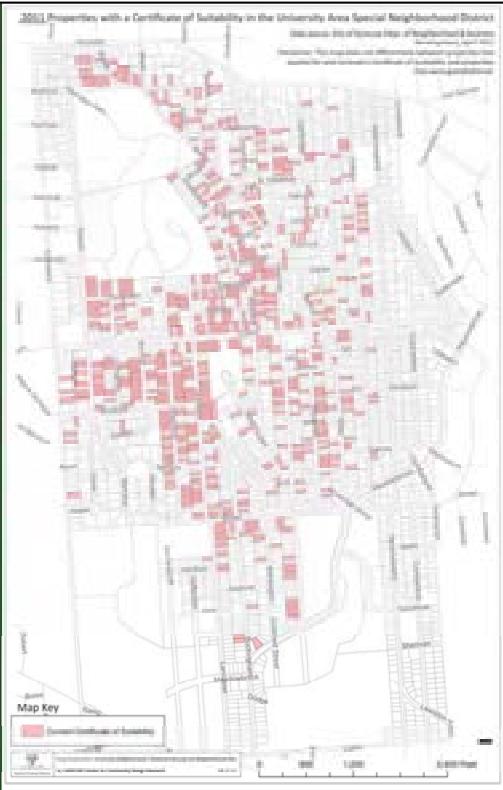
# 2011 Properties with a Certificate of Suitability in the University Area Special Neighborhood District

Data source: City of Syracuse Dept. of Neighborhood & Business Development, April 2011

Disclaimer: This map does not differentiate between properties that applied for and received a Certificate of Suitability and properties that were grandfathered.



## Properties with certificates of suitability - 2011



- This map illustrates the properties that have Certificates of Suitability. This data was input based on a hard copy document provided by the city, not GIS data.
- Includes grandfathered as well as those that went through application process – but does not distinguish between them.

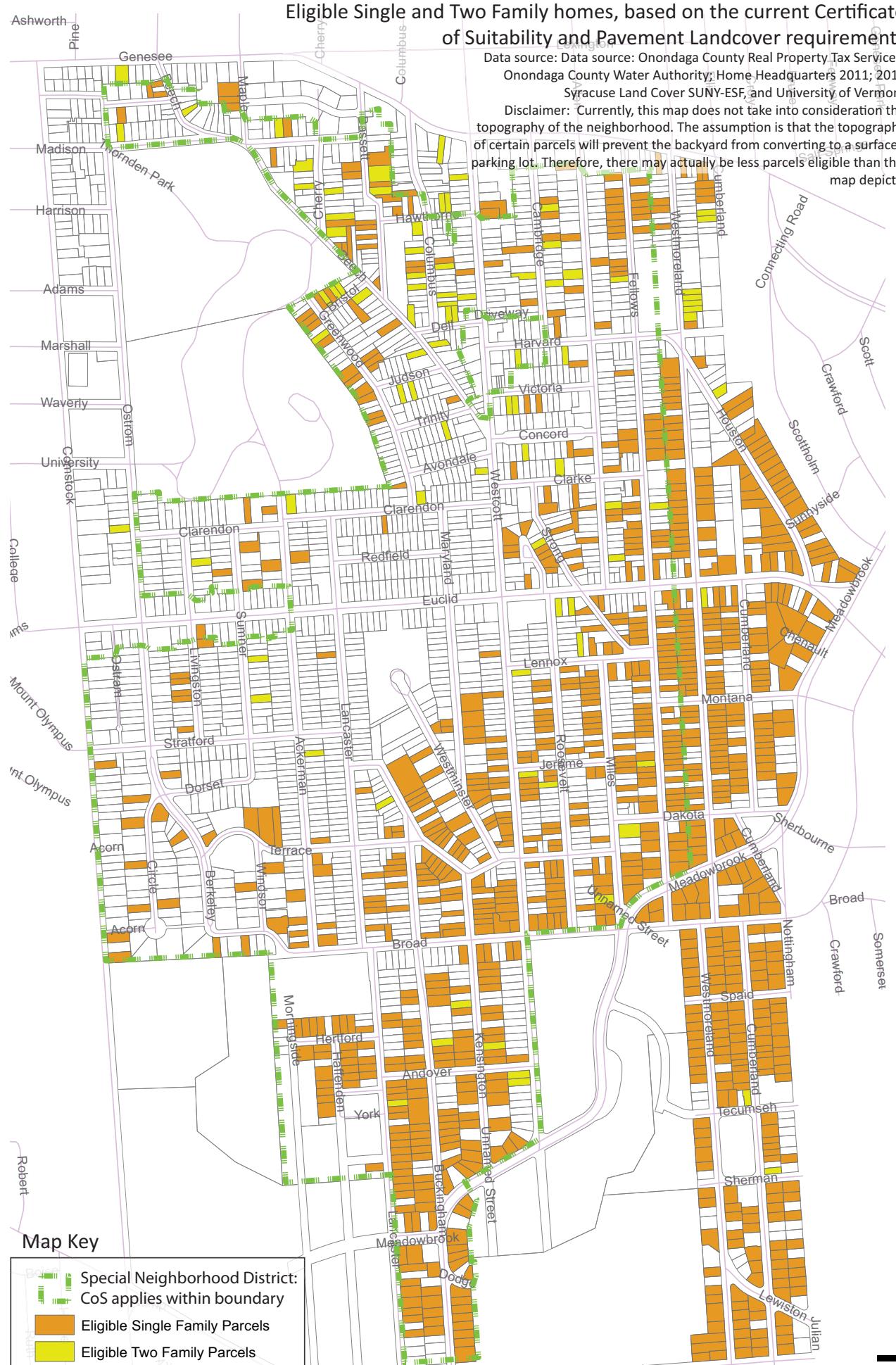
# Eligible Single and Two Family homes, based on the current Certificate of Suitability and Pavement Landcover requirements

Data source: Onondaga County Real Property Tax Services;

Onondaga County Water Authority; Home Headquarters 2011; 2010

Syracuse Land Cover SUNY-ESF, and University of Vermont

Disclaimer: Currently, this map does not take into consideration the topography of the neighborhood. The assumption is that the topography of certain parcels will prevent the backyard from converting to a surfaced parking lot. Therefore, there may actually be less parcels eligible than this map depicts.



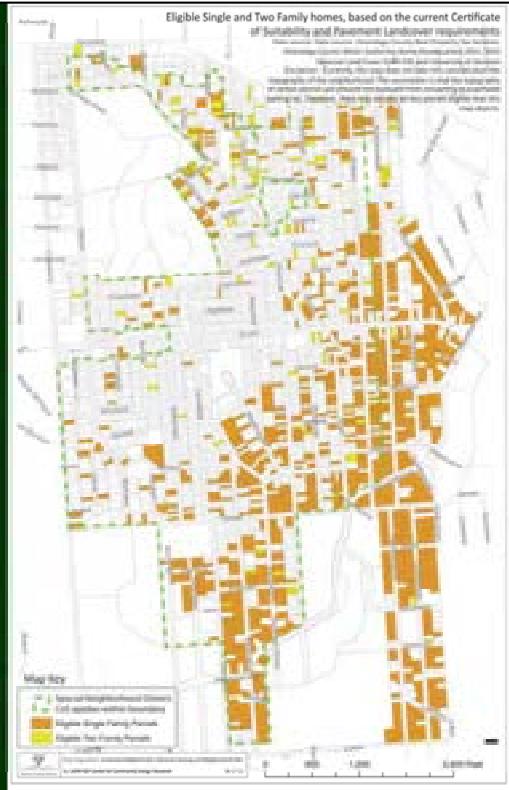
Map Prepared for: University Neighborhood / Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan

By: SUNY-ESF Center for Community Design Research

08-17-11

0 600 1,200 2,400 Feet

## Properties eligible for Certificate of Suitability



- This map illustrates the properties with an existing Certificate of Suitability, outlined in red, and those that are eligible based on current regulation but do not yet have a certificate. The dark green line indicates the current special district boundary.
- Eligible parcels were determined based on number of bedrooms, related parking requirements, and maximum allowable building and paving coverage.
  - Eligible single family homes are shown in solid green. The regulations require one backyard parking space per bedroom, with a maximum of three parking spaces allowed. Thus single family homes with more than three bedrooms are not eligible for a certificate.
  - Eligible two family homes are shown in solid red. The regulations require one backyard parking space per bedroom, with a maximum of four parking space allowed. Thus two-family homes with more than four bedrooms are not eligible for a certificate.
- Not considered in this analysis is the existing topography which in some areas will prevent the provision of back yard parking. Thus the number of eligible properties is probably less than shown on this map.
- It was noted by an AC member that most if not all properties in Berkeley Park have 4 or more bedrooms so the parcel data information may not be totally accurate. However, this map gives a reasonable indication of properties that may be eligible for a C of S.

**Priority: Address quality of living conditions, deterioration of houses and behavior in concentrated student area – and do not allow it to expand**

- High concentration of young college age students
- Short term temporary residency – 2 to 3 year residency typical, probably not in same place
  - Not really concerned with quality or condition of property provided by landlord
  - Not really concerned about own behavior
  - Want to be close to campus so willing to pay more for lower quality
- Requires more oversight and responsibility by academic institutions

- We have developed a series of goals and action strategies that are still very relevant given what we have come to understand through analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data. But in terms of determining priority actions, I think that there are several.
- The student area around Euclid emerged as an area of concern very early in this process
- The quantitative data in combination with the qualitative from the workshops reinforces the depth of this problem
- Allowing this to continue and expand unabated will result in additional problems with physical condition and quality of life issues. Long term residents will continue to move out of the areas adjacent to the concentrated student area.

## **Priority: Stabilize and then increase the number of long term residents, both homeowners and renters**

- The number of non-students in the neighborhood is declining
- Use data and neighborhood characteristics to target specific areas of the neighborhood for programs or development types to encourage home ownership or long term rentals, using characteristics that are attractive to different age or life stage groups.
- For example, for a young family:
  - Schools within walking distance
  - Vibrant, mixed use business district
  - Intact housing stock
  - Right size – bedrooms, bathrooms
- Other groups to consider – young professionals, older adults/empty nesters, elderly residents

An example of using walking distance from resources as a way of defining target areas

University Neighborhood Analysis  
Attractive Areas for Prospective Long-Term Residents



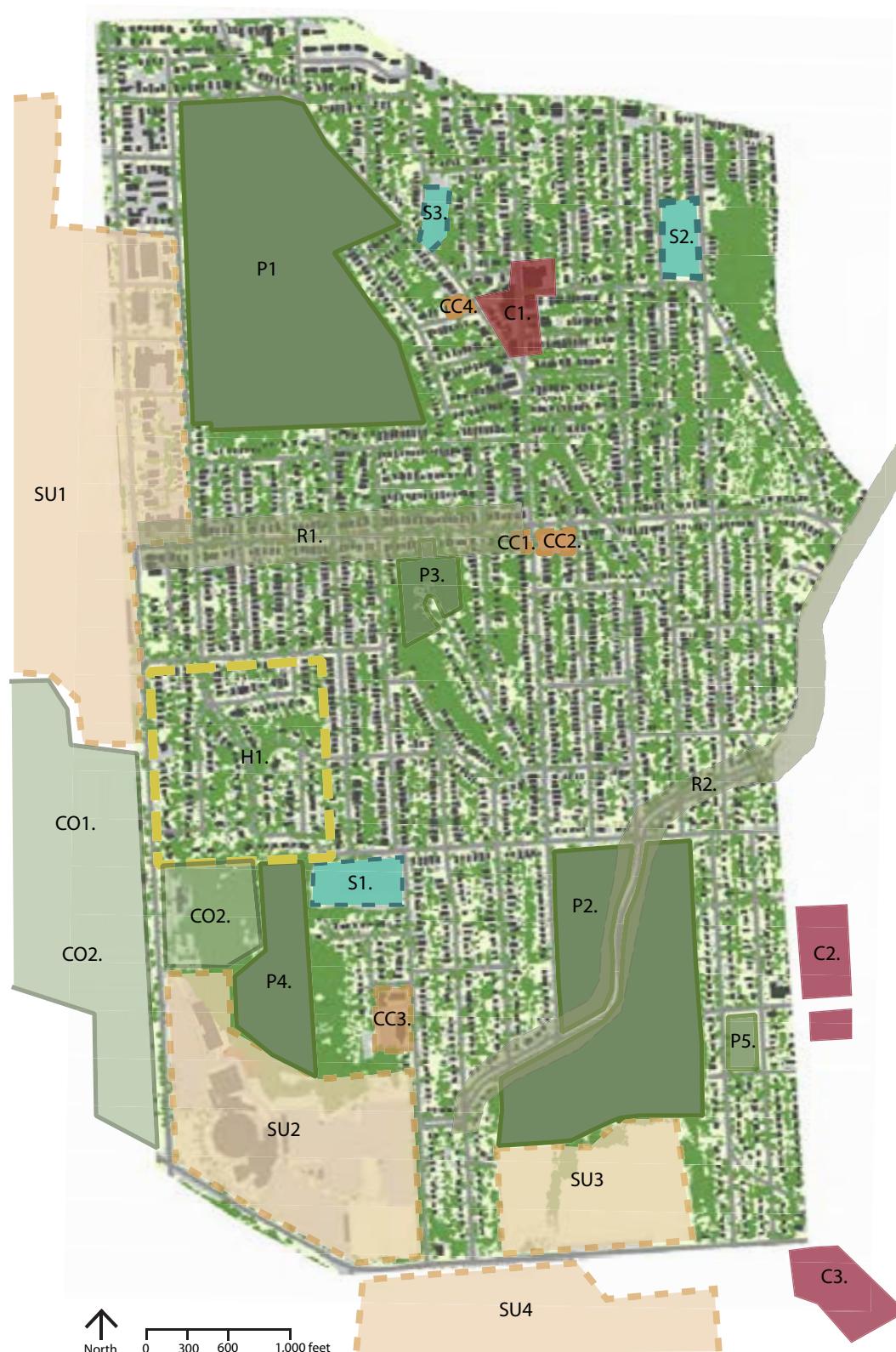
- This example of locating target areas for encouraging long term housing utilizes only walking distance to resources as the prime characteristic. In addition to walking distance a combination of other characteristics using the data that has been collected can be used to determine priority areas for certain programs.

### **Priority: Address issues related to density**

- Parking, Traffic and congestion, wear and tear on houses
- Requires more regulatory and service attention than lower density areas for specific issues

## **Next Steps as outlined at 8-11-11 meeting**

- Develop recommendations and principles for targeted housing.
- Review revisions to Vision, goals and action strategies, and determine priorities.
- Complete documentation of process with small working group.



#### Syracuse University

SU1. Main Campus  
 SU2. Manley Field House  
 SU3. Hookway Athletic Fields  
 SU4. South Campus

#### Commercial Areas

C1. Westcott Business District  
 C2. Nottingham Plaza  
 C3. Tops Plaza

#### Parks/Open Space

P1. Thornden Park  
 P2. Barry Park/Meadowbrook  
 P3. Westmoreland Park  
 P4. Morningside Water Tower  
 P5. Sherman Field

#### Schools

S1. Ed Smith School - SCSD  
 S2. Levy School - SCSD  
 S3. Sumner School - PEACE Inc

#### Valued Road Corridors

R1. Euclid Avenue  
 R2. Meadowbrook Avenue

#### Community Centers/Places of Worship

CC1. Westcott Community Center  
 CC2. Erwin United Methodist Church  
 CC3. All Souls Church  
 CC4. Baptist Church

#### Cemetery Open Space

CO1. Oakwood Cemetery  
 CO2. Morningside Cemetery

#### National Historic District

H1. Berkeley Park

Note: Oakwood Cemetery and Thornden Park are on the National Historic Register. There are also individual houses in the neighborhood on the National and Local Historic Registers, or are eligible to be listed.

Source of land cover map base: University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. 2011. Syracuse High-Resolution Land Cover 2010. Online: <http://www.uvm.edu/~joneildu/downloads/FOS/Syracuse/>

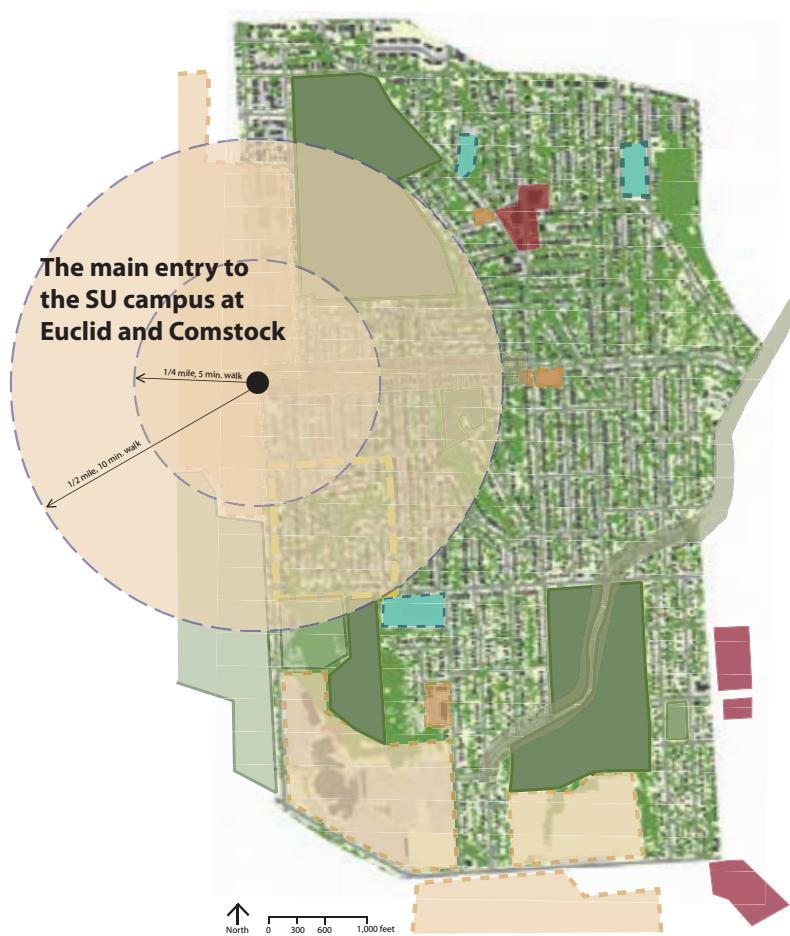
## Neighborhood Resources

# University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan

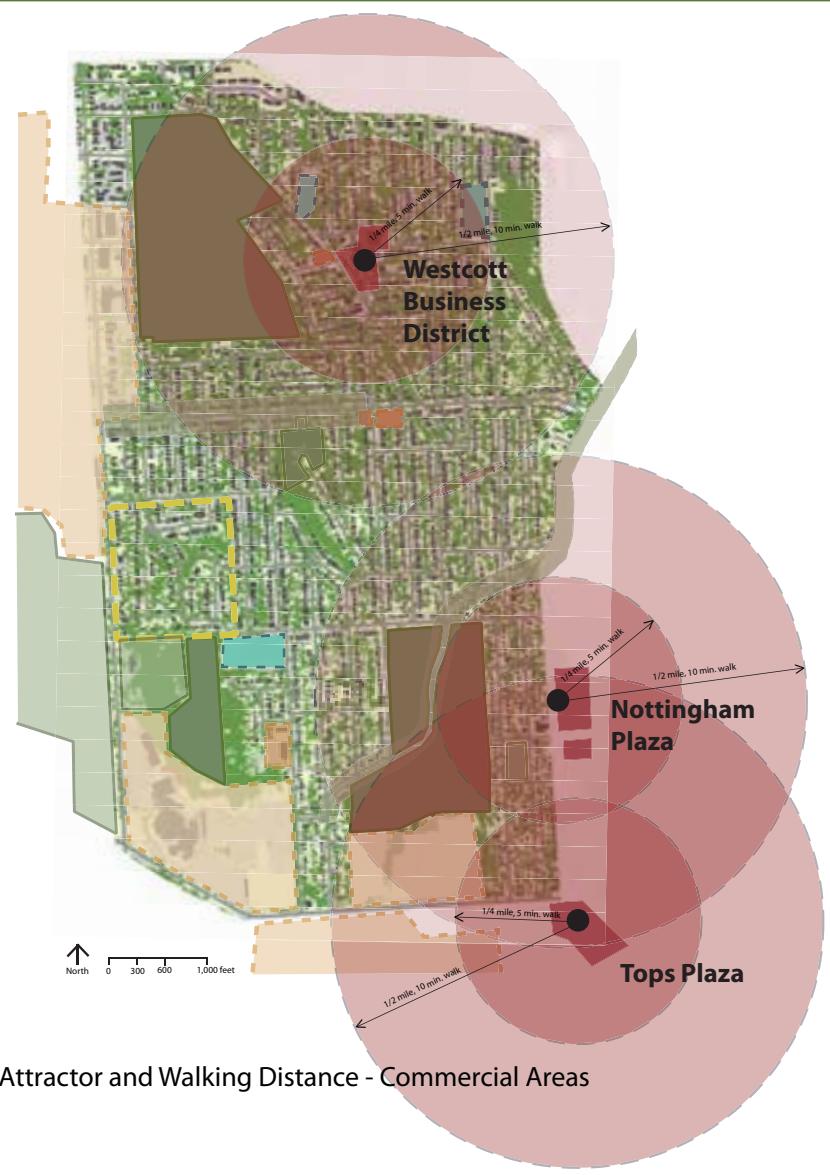
Prepared by SUNY ESF Center for Community Design Research

Sponsored by University Neighborhood Preservation Association

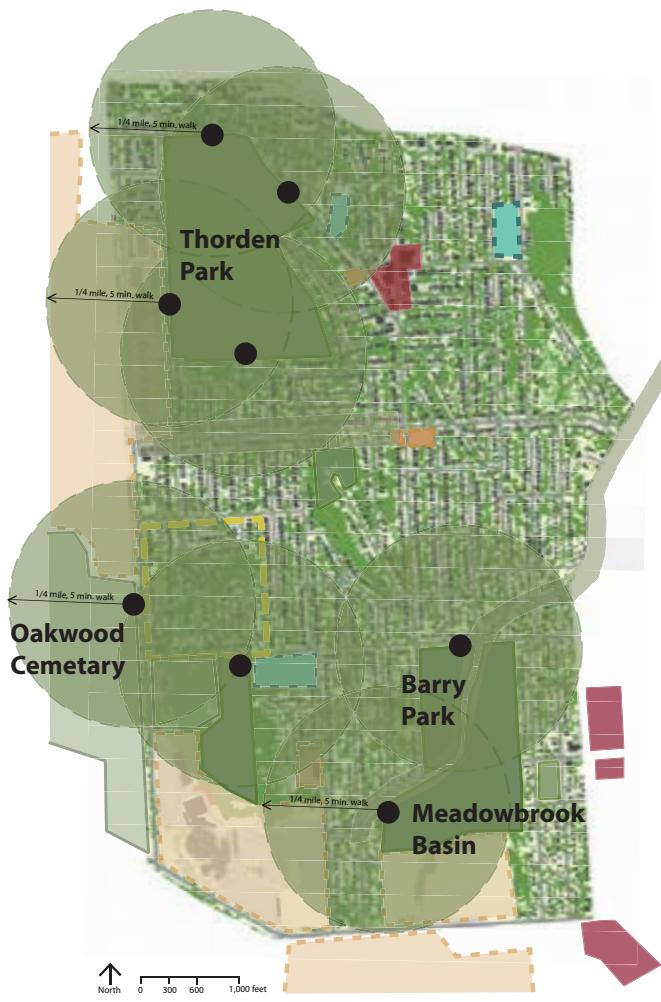
April 2012



Major Attractor and Walking Distance - Higher Education



#### Major Attractor and Walking Distance - Commercial Areas



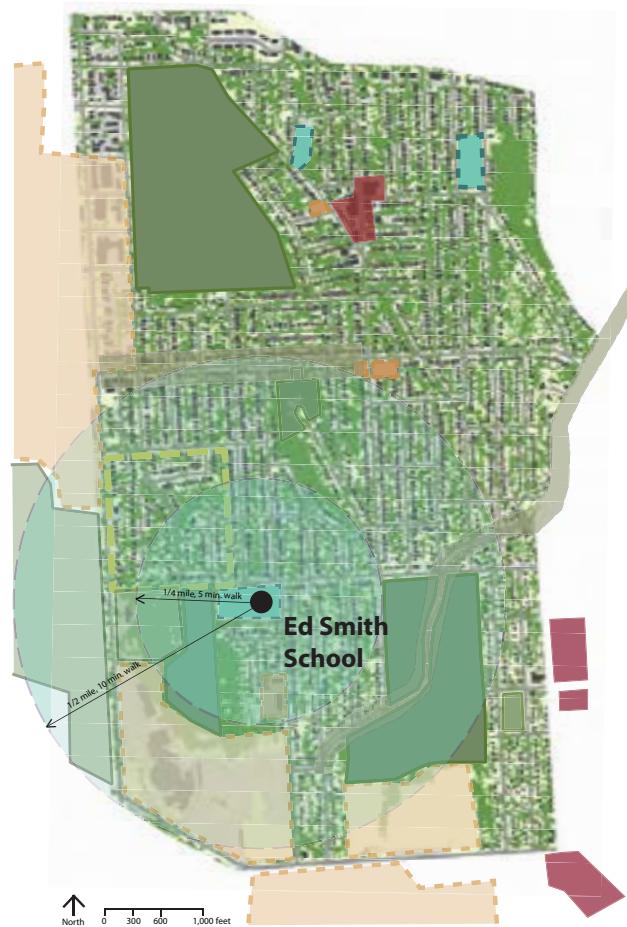
#### Major Attractor and Walking Distance - Parks & Open Spaces

As seen on the *Neighborhood Resources* map, the neighborhood is rich in assets. Of those identified, the resources shown on this map are the major attractors in the neighborhood.

- The University is the primary initial attractor of most workshop participants.
  - Commercial areas are also major attractors. The Westcott Business District is the most highly valued, but Nottingham Plaza and Tops Plaza are also important to

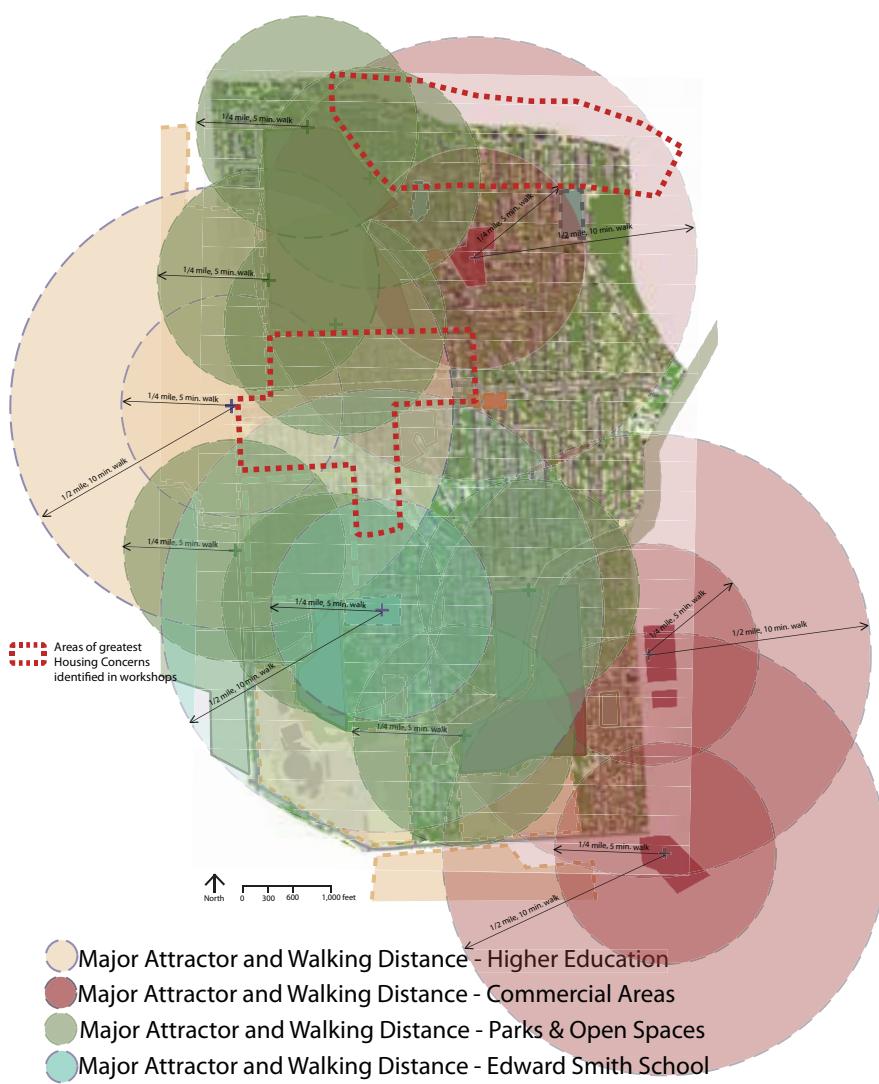
residents.

- The parks and open space are highly valued and represent another resource that make areas within walking distance attractive places to live.
- Edward Smith School has an excellent reputation and is a significant resource in the neighborhood. Most of the southern half of the neighborhood is within easy walking distance and should use this proximity to best advantage.

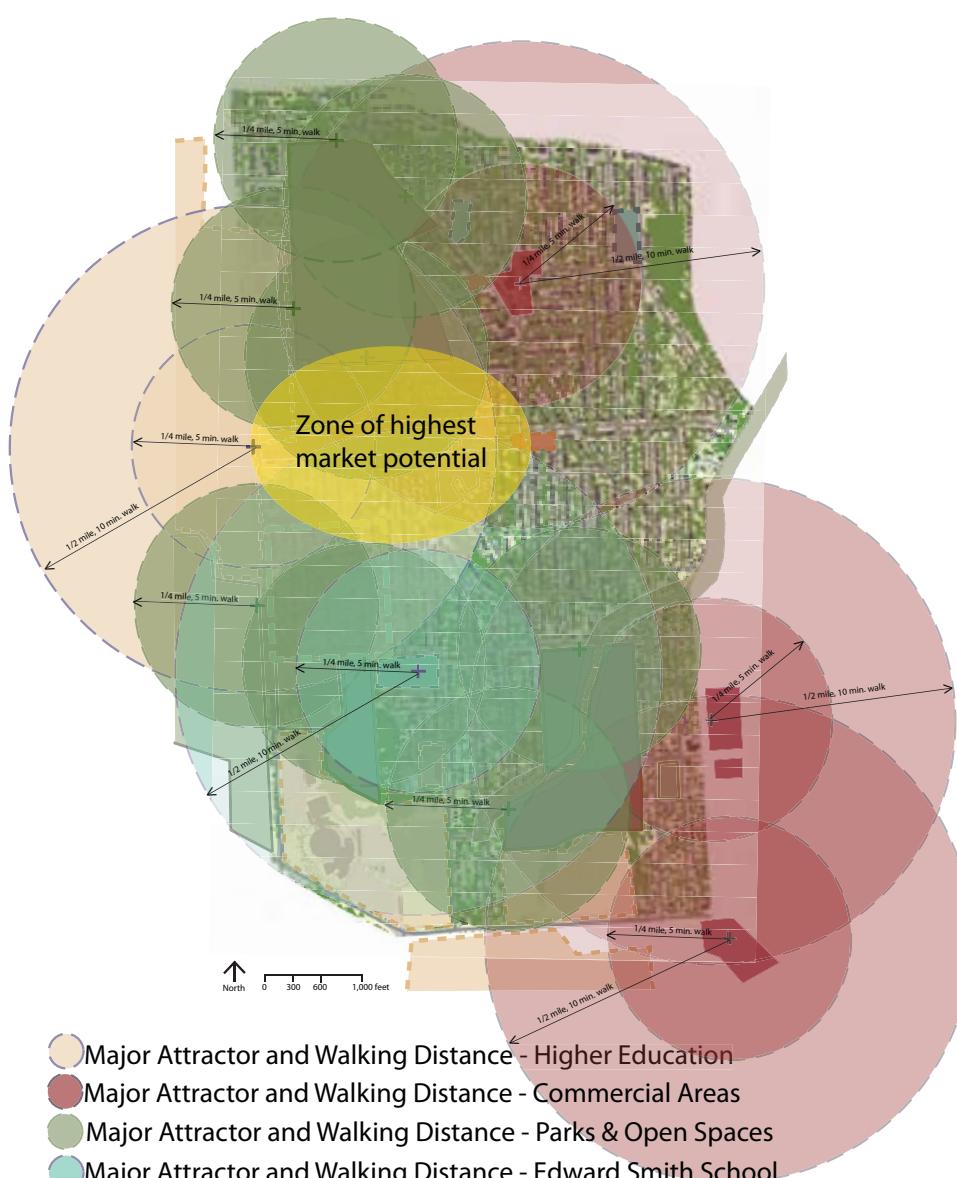


Major Attractor and Walking Distance - Edward Smith School

This series of maps shows 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile walking distance from these major attractors. A 1/4 mile distance takes an average of about 5 minutes and is a commonly used distance to determine an easy walk for most people. A 1/2 mile walk takes about 10 minutes and is a reasonable distance to walk to destinations in urban neighborhoods.



1. The diagram to the left shows all of the attractors and their walking distance radii overlaid on one another. Also shown are the areas identified by workshop participants as those with the greatest housing concerns. The area of concern centered on Euclid, due to the high concentration of student rentals concides with the area that has the easiest access to the most resources in the neighborhood.



Thought about in a different way, the area of high student rental concentration is the zone of highest market potential. Currently, SU and the other institutions are the greatest attractors to a specific market - young college students.

However, there are other resources - Westcott Business District, the parks, Ed Smith School - that should be desirable to a more mixed population. The academic institutions are also attractive to older adults looking for the education, culture, entertainment and health care that are typically found on or in association with college campuses.

In the future the Zone of Highest Market Potential is likely to be attractive to mixed age groups, long and short term residents, and restoration and reuse of the existing housing stock. The Plan promotes this long term vision.

## Zone of Highest Market Potential

# University/Westcott Housing and Neighborhood Plan

Prepared by SUNY ESF Center for Community Design Research

Sponsored by University Neighborhood Preservation Association

April 2012