

EDGEWOOD URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
February 2007

I. Location of the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area

The Edgewood Urban Renewal Area is located approximately one mile west of downtown Akron in the City of Akron, County of Summit, State of Ohio, and is bounded as shown on Map B and as described in Exhibit 1, attached. The Renewal Area encompasses approximately 44 acres and is approximately bounded by Euclid Avenue on the north, Moon Street on the west, Rhodes Avenue on the east and Vernon Odom Boulevard and Berry Avenue on the south.

II. Statement of Public Purpose and Policy

The City has prepared this Plan as part of carrying out the City's public purpose of eliminating and preventing the recurrence of blight in the Plan area. This Plan is an "urban renewal plan" within the meaning of O.R.C. Section 725.01, Section 1728.01 and Section 303.

III. Statement of Development Objectives to be Achieved by the Project

The goals of the City of Akron in undertaking the project are to work closely with neighborhood residents and property owners to: 1) eliminate blight and to prevent the recurrence of blight in the project area; 2) eliminate incompatible land uses in the project area; 3) facilitate the development of new housing and new retail opportunities in appropriate locations in the project area to offset economic stagnation; 4) establish development standards to guide the development of new structures and activities along Vernon Odom Boulevard; 5) facilitate the development of a successful business area by developing an attractive, convenient and accessible environment for business, residential and cultural uses and 6) increase the attractiveness of the project area.

To carry out project goals, the following specific objectives are proposed:

A. Land Use Objectives

1. Remove blighted properties within the project area that are deteriorated, or a threat to the public health, safety and general welfare.
2. Change zoning to match desired land uses.

3. Increase the attractiveness and stability of the residential area by facilitating new home construction and assuring that existing structures meet present day development standards.
4. Eliminate incompatible land uses that detract from the viable development of the area.
5. Facilitate the construction of the new 221-unit HOPE VI development consisting of a mix of 172 on-site townhome apartments and one-bedroom flats (approximately 49 single-family homes will also be constructed, but most of these will be located outside of the Renewal Area).
6. Develop attractive pedestrian oriented linkages to the Akron Zoo and Vernon Odom Boulevard to enable safe and convenient access.
7. Create an attractive, well-landscaped, pedestrian friendly retail development along Vernon Odom Boulevard.
8. Prohibit undesirable uses from locating in the project area, including uses that disrupt a safe, pedestrian-oriented business environment.

B. Housing Objective

1. Acquire and/or demolish severely deteriorated structures and structures necessary to carry out development objectives.
2. Facilitate the construction of the new 221-unit HOPE VI project, consisting of a mix of 172 on-site townhome apartments and one-bedroom flats (approximately 49 single-family homes will also be constructed, but most of these will be located outside of the Renewal Area).
3. Create new housing of varying densities. Infill housing should complement existing housing in terms of size, setback and general building elevations (in terms of roof lines being parallel or perpendicular to the street).
4. Construct a variety of housing types to afford a choice for Akron residents in terms of size, style and price.

5. Assist occupants of homes purchased for demolition with relocation and afford them the opportunity to relocate into new homes in the Renewal Area if they so desire. If relocation is necessary, the City will follow the Relocation Plan and Activity Program adopted by Akron City Council.
7. Assist in providing housing of standard quality in the area by eliminating housing code violations through housing rehabilitation.
8. Discourage conversions of single-family homes into multi-unit structures.
9. Encourage the development of mixed-use buildings along Vernon Odom Boulevard, with retail on the ground floor and residential units above.
10. Encourage ongoing pride, respect, and maintenance of residential property on the part of homeowners, landlords and tenants. Give particular attention to rental property.
11. Utilize green building and energy-saving measures in new construction.

C. Environmental Objectives

Develop an attractive and visually improved environment within the Renewal Area:

1. Remove properties that are poorly maintained or deteriorated, attract nuisance activities and are detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the general public and persons who pass through the area.
2. Remove blight in the area caused by overcrowding or inappropriate land use.
3. Implement redevelopment that will prevent blighted conditions from recurring which are harmful to persons within, adjacent to, and who pass through the renewal area.
4. Improve the functional and physical condition of the project area.

5. Keep the project area free of debris, trash and litter. Encourage property owners to clean up any lot littered with trash, debris or anything else that constitutes a blighting influence to neighboring properties.
6. Encourage attractive pedestrian oriented linkages to provide safe and convenient access to the Akron Zoo.
7. Create an attractive, well-landscaped and well-lighted pedestrian-friendly environment along Vernon Odom Boulevard to facilitate visits between the Edgewood Community Center, the future Helen Arnold School, the future Urban League headquarters, Lane Field and the Wooster Branch Library.
8. Promote a continuous retail edge at the property line along the Vernon Odom Boulevard where possible.
9. Utilize green building and energy-saving measures in new construction.
10. Buffer retail uses from nearby residential uses.

D. Public Improvements Objective

Provide the public improvements necessary for redevelopment, including streets, utilities, water and sewer, sidewalks, curbing, street trees, street lighting, etc. where necessary.

1. Utilize rear alleys and on-street parking to reduce the visibility of garages from primary streets.

E. Circulation and Transportation Objectives

Reduce conflicts among all forms of circulation routes, including pedestrian, vehicular, school and commercial traffic:

1. Provide a pedestrian oriented streetscape for the HOPE VI project area.
2. Provide well-lit and landscaped parking areas for any surface lots. Parking areas should not detract from a pedestrian-oriented environment by utilizing low ornamental walls or

fencing with landscaping to separate the sidewalk from the parking area

3. Use traffic calming measures along Edgewood Avenue, Euclid Avenue and Vernon Odom Boulevard to reduce the speed of traffic and allow for safe pedestrian access to the Akron Zoo and the new Helen Arnold School (under construction).

F. Economic Objective

Promote new housing construction and retail development where appropriate to revitalize the redevelopment area and provide new housing opportunities for Akron residents.

1. Redevelop Vernon Odom Boulevard as a viable area for businesses to locate.
2. Develop retail and office uses along Vernon Odom Boulevard to provide neighborhood residents with necessary services.

III. Types of Proposed Renewal Actions

Proposed renewal actions to be carried out by the City following adoption of the Renewal Plan may include acquisition and clearance of property, the sale or lease of land for redevelopment, the provision of grants and loans for property improvements, construction of supporting infrastructure, vacation of streets and other rights of way and additional actions to support new housing construction, retail or office activity. Redevelopment sites controlled by the City are to be acquired by agreements with the City setting forth permitted uses, use restrictions and development requirements.

A. Acquisition to remove blighting influences

The City may acquire and demolish buildings that are blighting influences or acquire property to assure orderly redevelopment in keeping with the objectives of the Edgewood Renewal Plan. Properties proposed to be acquired for this purpose in the Renewal Area will be identified as part of the plan.

B. Rehabilitation of private property

For properties not designated for acquisition, inspection services, technical assistance, grants, matching grants, deferred loans and

low interest loans may be available to assist property owners with building improvements. The City of Akron Housing Division and the Akron Health Department will enforce exterior housing codes. Public improvements will be undertaken as necessary within the project area. Improvements will include paved streets, new curbs, sewers, sidewalks, street lighting and street trees, etc.

The City will provide assistance to private property owners within the boundaries of the Renewal Area in order to improve the exterior of business properties. Property improvements to businesses that are assisted by the City are expected to meet the intent of the objectives of the Renewal Plan and must be approved by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission.

IV. Land Use Plan

A. Permitted Land Uses

Permitted land uses within the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area include a mixture of attached and detached single-family residences, apartment, retail development, commercial development and recreational/open space uses dependent upon location and review. Site specific mixed use retail and residential development is permitted along Vernon Odom Boulevard, subject to review.

B. Zoning

1. Existing Zoning

Existing zoning within the Renewal Area consists of Single-Family Residential (U1, H1, A1), Two-Family Residential (U1, H1, A2), Apartment (U2, H1, A3), Retail Business (U3, H1, A1 and U3, H1, A2) and Commercial (U4, H1, A3) and accurately reflects existing conditions in most instances. See Existing Zoning Map C.

2. Proposed Zoning

In order to facilitate the development of new retail uses along Vernon Odom Boulevard, the following zoning changes are recommended:

- a. Change zoning along the north side of Vernon Odom Boulevard between Raymond Street and Fern Street

from Single Family Residential U1, H1, A1 to Retail U3, H1, A2 at a lot depth of approximately 150 feet (following rear property lines of lots fronting on Vernon Odom Boulevard).

- b. Change zoning along the north side of Vernon Odom Boulevard between Edgewood Avenue and Raymond Street north to the newly proposed alley associated with the Edgewood HOPE VI revitalization from Apartment (U2, H1, A3) to Retail Business Use District (U3, H1, A2).
- c. Change zoning for the entire block bordered by Vernon Odom Boulevard on the north, Raymond Street on the east, Berry Avenue on the south and Mallison Avenue on the west from Two-Family Residential U1, H1, A2 to Retail U3, H1, A2.

Zoning for the rest of the Renewal Area will remain the same. See Proposed Zoning Map E.

C. Additional Development Standards and Regulations

In addition to complying with the development standards and regulations set forth in the Akron Zoning Code, new development in the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area shall comply with the following:

1. For the primary HOPE VI project area (bordered by Euclid Avenue on the north, Rhodes Avenue on the east, Vernon Odom Boulevard on the south and Raymond Street on the west):
 - a. All layout plans will be approved by the City of Akron Department of Planning and Urban Development.
 - b. A mix of apartment and single-family uses is desired. Retail development and mixed use development (retail on the ground floor with residential units above) is desired along Vernon Odom Boulevard.
 - c. Front porches are encouraged. Front porches must have a minimum depth of six feet.

2. For properties outside of the HOPE VI project area:
 - a. A mix of infill single-family homes is recommended along residential streets. Retail uses are recommended along Vernon Odom Boulevard. Mixed use development is also appropriate along Vernon Odom Boulevard.
 - b. For infill housing, setbacks and building configuration should be consistent with surrounding housing.
 - c. Front porches are encouraged for all units. Porches must have a depth of at least six feet. A depth of eight feet is encouraged.
 - d. Covered, two-car parking is recommended for all housing. In some cases, depending on the style of unit, a single-car garage with an open parking space can be provided. Recessed garages and side entry garages are recommended. No garage will be allowed to protrude out from the primary building façade. Detached garages are acceptable.

3. For all property in the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area;
 - a. No billboards or outdoor advertising displays of any nature shall be placed, erected or located in the Edgewood Area except for the purpose of advertising redevelopment activity occurring as part of this plan.
 - b. All permanent signs shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and receive the approval of the Akron City Planning Commission. The following guidelines apply to all exterior signage in the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area:
 - 1) Building mounted signage shall be for business identification only.
 - 2) Pole signs are prohibited.
 - 3) Ground mounted signs shall be for one business only.
 - 4) All signage materials shall be compatible with building materials and colors.
 - 5) Mechanically moving signage or flashing lights shall be prohibited.

- 6) A sign may not project above the roof of a structure to which it is affixed.
- c. All private and public utilities will be placed underground.
 - d. All outdoor storage areas shall be screened from view by solid walls or solid fences at least six feet in height. Such fencing and screening material shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Planning and Urban Development. Stockade or chain-link fencing is not permitted in the development.
 - e. Vehicular ingress and egress shall be approved by the Traffic Engineer.
 - f. All public exterior areas shall be well lighted in a manner suitable for the intended use. Lighting should be adequate for the intended use, but should be sited and of such a nature as to not be intrusive into surrounding areas.
 - g. The developer shall submit a storm water management plan to control the run-off, siltation and sedimentation during construction and to control the run-off after the development is completed. The plan is to be consistent with all the requirements of Section 193.101-.114 of the Code of Ordinances and is subject to the approval of the Bureau of Engineering. The storm water management plan must be submitted prior to the issuance of any building permits.
 - h. All site plans shall be subject to approval by the City of Akron's Development of Planning and Urban Development.
 - i. For development exceeding four units, all landscape plans shall be prepared by a registered landscape architect. The plan shall identify all plant material to be used by name, species, size, location, spacing and any other necessary information. Recommended landscaping material should be identified for use by individual property owners.

- j. Mailboxes will be attached to the house or clustered in appropriate locations. No freestanding mailboxes will be allowed.
- k. The design, layout and access to off-street parking shall be reviewed and approved by the City.
- l. Drive-thru pickup windows and coverings are prohibited on Vernon Odom Boulevard building frontages and may be attached to the rear or side of the principal structure.
- m. All business buildings shall include visible decorative masonry materials. All materials shall be subject to approval by the Department of Planning and Urban Development.
- n. On site trash materials shall be stored in structures that match the materials of the primary buildings to the height of the dumpster and be located at the rear of the building.

V. Project Proposals

A. Land Acquisition and Disposition

1. Identification of Real Property Proposed to be Acquired

Property will be acquired as necessary in order to meet development objectives. Property acquisition and disposition are subject to approval by Akron City Council. See Exhibit 3 and Map F, Proposed Acquisitions.

2. Conditions under which Properties Not Identified to be Acquired may be Acquired

Properties that are severely deteriorated (substandard or major deterioration) may be acquired in order to remove conditions of blight that constitute a threat to health, safety and welfare in the area. Structures that are not substandard or are not in a state of major deterioration may be acquired when they are necessary for public improvements, or when their acquisition is necessary in order to carry out the development goals of the plan and to permit proper and orderly development in the project area.

3. Conditions under which Properties Identified to be Acquired may not be Acquired.

As properties are identified for acquisition, such properties may not be acquired if it is determined that an acceptable alternative will achieve the objectives of the Plan, if project priorities change or if Federal Program funding is substantially reduced.

B. Rehabilitation and New Construction

The project involves new construction and rehabilitation. For properties not designated for acquisition, inspection services, technical assistance, grants, matching grants, deferred loans and low interest loans may be available to assist property owners with building improvements.

C. Redeveloper's Obligations for Land Purchased or Leased from the City of Akron

A Sale or Lease Agreement shall restrict development within the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area on land to be sold or leased by the City for redevelopment. The Sale or Lease Agreement or Development Agreement and project reviews and approval shall apply to all of the Redeveloper's contiguous property within the Renewal Area. The Sale or Lease Agreement or Development Agreement shall include the following provisions:

1. The Redeveloper shall submit site plans and building plans to the City of Akron, Department of Planning and Urban Development. The Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission shall review these plans, and the City Planning Commission shall approve these plans prior to commencement of construction to determine compliance of such plans with the Renewal Plan. It is expressly understood that approval of any plans by the City of Akron applies to any and all features shown thereon; and that any subsequent additions, deletions, or other modifications thereof are required to be submitted by the developer before construction of such modifications can begin.
2. The Redeveloper shall commence new construction on land acquired by the City and conveyed to the Developer within a

specified amount of time from the date of conveyance as stipulated in the development agreement.

3. The Redeveloper shall agree that no covenant, agreement, lease conveyance or other instrument relating to the property shall be effected or executed on the basis or race, creed, color, sex or national origin in the sale, lease, use or occupancy thereof.
4. The Redeveloper shall maintain the structure and facilities in accordance with all codes and ordinances of the City of Akron.

D. Design Guidelines & Recommendations for single family-residential structures built on lots acquired from the City

Buyers of single lots from the City in order to construct single-family homes must present a site plan and elevation of the proposed structures. Builders of these houses must follow these guidelines in the design of the house.

1. Foundation:
 - a. Exposed foundations of brick veneer, stone, split-face block, or poured and textures concrete are encouraged on all exposed foundations, and required on exposed foundations over 18 inches in height.
 - b. Identify material and color on elevations.
2. Siding:
 - a. Install pronounced corner boards, window / door trim, and frieze board in color contrasting with siding (if appropriate to style). Build trim elements out with filler boards to allow siding to slip behind trim.
 - b. "Beltlines" or "band boards" are encouraged between first and second floors, and as transition between materials (if appropriate to style).
 - c. Use of cement fiberboard siding is encouraged.
 - d. If vinyl is used, a maximum reveal of 6 inches is preferred.

- e. Trim boards should be of appropriate scale.
- f. Identify materials and colors on elevations.

3. Elevations:

- a. The use of stone / masonry is encouraged (if appropriate to style), but not required if overall massing proportions, details, and materials are well thought out.
- b. No more than three (3) materials/textures/colors be used on one elevation (exclusive of foundation). Identify all materials and colors.
- c. Identify window type and brand. Style should be compatible with home style.
- d. Eaves should be well proportioned and appropriate to the architectural style.

4. Porches:

- a. Porches are encouraged (if appropriate to home style), but not required. If included, a minimum depth of 8 feet is preferred.
- b. Show railing and column details on drawing/s at appropriate scale. Columns should be of appropriate scale and detail consistent with architectural style.
- c. Consider covered back porches or other useable outdoor spaces. A minimum of 144 sq. ft. hard surface, or deck, is encouraged.

5. Garages:

- a. Detached garages are acceptable. Two-car garages are preferred.
- b. Front of garage is NOT to project beyond face of front elevation. The side of a garage may be in front of the façade if the garage is sited perpendicular to the house front. This side must contain a window.

- c. Trim should match the house.

6. Visitability

Homes designed for “*visitability*” by persons with restricted physical mobility is encouraged. This means:

- a. At least one at-grade entry
- b. That entry being at least 36” wide
- c. Interior first-floor hallways at least 36” wide
- d. First-floor bathroom or half-bath with 36” wide doorway and interior spacing suitable for wheelchair maneuverability

7. Sustainable Development, or Green Building, Guidelines

The Edgewood Renewal Plan seeks to promote residential development that is approached with a concern for the environment and sustainability. Toward that end, buyers of parcels from the City will have to demonstrate the extent to which their homes and site development will respond to the following recommendations:

A. Site

- Protect existing plants and trees
- Retain disturbed topsoil for post construction use
- Minimal disturbance of site to prevent erosion
- Orient homes to take advantage of passive solar energy

B. Building envelope

- Use of poured concrete foam insulated foundation walls
- Properly drain and insulate foundation
- Maximum use of engineered lumber products
- Use of insulated wall system (structural insulated panels) with a minimum insulation factor of R-25
- Dimension of homes dictated by standard lumber lengths to minimize waste

C. Interior

- Maximum use of natural lighting through the use of skylights, light tubes and doors.
- Windows designed and placed to provide cross ventilation
- Low e glass for all windows
- Well insulated doors that are R-5 or greater
- No use of materials that produce out-gassing of noxious fumes
- All paint and finishes contain low volatile organic compounds
- No use of lauan as plywood or interior doors in support of endangered tropical rainforests

D. Roof

- 40-year life
- Made of recycled materials when available

E. Heating and Cooling

- Heat delivery systems installed in interior walls
- Use of high efficiency heating and cooling system (90% or better)
- Programmable thermostats
- Installation of whole house ventilation system
- All hot water lines insulated

F. Appliances and Plumbing

- Use of energy Star appliances
- Maximum use of compact fluorescent bulbs
- Water saving fixtures and utilities

G. Flooring

- Use of recycled wood, cork, bamboo or other sustainable materials
- Natural or recycled content carpeting
- Water based urethane finishes
- Ceramic tile installed with low COC adhesives

H. Cabinetry and Trim

- No materials manufactures with formaldehyde
- Recycled, engineered or certified forest wood

I. Exterior

- Use of long lasting finishes such as brick, stone, stucco or fiber cement
- Solar powered exterior lighting
- Decking and outdoor furnishing made from recycled materials or wood from certified forests
- Downspout must discharge at least five feet from foundation

J. Garages

- Detached or, if attached, sealed and ventilated to minimize seepage of automobile fumes into the house

K. Construction waste

- Maximize recycling of construction waste

VI. Other Provisions

A. Relationship to Local Objectives

The Urban Renewal Plan proposals are based on planning objectives for the City of Akron as expressed in the General Plan and Workable Program. The Renewal Plan provides for the redevelopment of the project area in a manner that will promote the public health, safety, morals and welfare.

The acquisition and elimination of blighted conditions and the prevention of the recurrence of blight will benefit the general public and the businesses and property owners within and adjacent to the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area.

The proposals of the plan will provide for the development of residential, retail, office, attendant facilities and parking.

B. Relocation Plan

Should action by the City result in displacement of any residents or businesses, the relocation of displaced individuals or families will be carried out in conformance with the City of Akron Relocation Plan and Activity Program.

C. Duration of the Renewal Plan Restrictions

The Renewal Plan and/or modification thereof shall be in force and effect for a period of 40 years from the date of approval of this Renewal Plan by the City of Akron. The termination of this Renewal Plan shall in no way permit the project land or any part thereof to be restricted on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin in the sale, use, or occupancy thereof; nor shall it permit the practice of discrimination based on race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

D. Provisions for Amending Approved Plan

The City Planning Commission and City Council may amend this Renewal Plan. A public hearing is not required unless the boundaries are changed.

VII. Legislation to be Utilized to Fulfill Plan Objectives

A. Ohio Revised Code: Tax Increment Equivalent

Tax increment financing, as permitted by the statutes, will assist the City in paying for improvements that will be undertaken within the Edgewood Renewal Area and other public improvements and costs necessary to accomplish the goals of the City's General Plan. Sections 5709.41 to 5709.43 permit the City to declare that improvements made on real property owned by the city and sold or leased to a developer are a "public purpose" and exempt from real property taxation for up to thirty years. The City can thereafter require the owner of any structure constructed on the parcel to make annual service payments in-lieu of taxes to the City. Chapter 725 permits the City to exempt from real property taxation the portion of the assessed valuation of improvements constructed pursuant to a development agreement. The City can thereafter require the owner of the improvements constructed on the parcel to make annual service payments in-lieu of taxes to the City.

Conditions described in the Eligibility Report for the Edgewood Urban Renewal Area also meet the definition of “blighted” as contained in Section 1728.01 of the Ohio Revised Code.