

Welcome

McKees Rocks Vacant Property Town Hall

You spoke, we listened.

Hosted by the McKees Rocks Community Development Corporation and the McKees Rocks Borough, in partnership with Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh, Grounded Strategies, Tricog Landbank, Dollar Bank, and Allegheny County Economic Development.

Overview

In August of 2018, the McKees Rocks CDC & McKees Rocks Borough hosted the first Vacant Property Town Hall, where residents voiced their thoughts and concerns.

In response to these concerns, the Borough and the CDC retained Palo Alto Partners to facilitate a Housing Strategy and Work Plan, which was completed in August of 2019.



Overview

- What? A Housing Strategy & Work Plan
- Who? McKees Rocks Borough & MRCDC retained Palo Alto Partners to complete the Plan
- Why? Residents consistently mention blight and safety as concerns
- What Else? Tonight you'll get an overview and hear from potential partners
- What's Next? Your participation informing next steps

Housing Strategy and Work Plan

Palo Alto determined that while McKees Rocks struggles with a large inventory of vacant residential property, the community's location and other assets create opportunities for revitalization.

The Plan prioritizes three data-driven strategies to address vacant property and a Work Plan to guide implementation.



Vacant property on Chartiers Avenue

Stakeholder and resident input

Main Concerns voiced by residents:

- ▶ Blight and public safety
- ▶ The conversion of owner-occupied property into rental units
- ▶ Improving the business district, with a desire to add neighborhood serving restaurants and retail to Lower Chartiers Ave.



Priority Strategies

- ▶ Preserve Existing Owner-Occupied Housing
- ▶ Coordinate a Robust Property Recycling Program
- ▶ Target Mixed-Use Projects within the Lower Chartiers Business District



Priority Strategies

Preserve Existing Owner-Occupied Housing

Only four of every ten properties in McKees Rocks are now owner-occupied
- the remaining owner-occupied households are at risk of being sold to an outside investor.

Maintaining the existing owner-occupied housing is essential to the long-term stability and economic growth of the community.

- ▶ Better maintained
- ▶ Costs more to replace the homes than to maintain them

Part of maintaining home ownership is helping existing home owners make needed repairs.



Who are we and what do we do?

- Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh offers free health and safety rehabilitation efforts to qualifying homeowners in Allegheny County
- 125 projects throughout the county, mainly in the city, per year.
- Where we go is dependent on funding

How will we engage with McKees Rocks?

- McKees Rocks will be part of our Building a Healthy Neighborhood (BaHN) in 2020
- Typically between \$12-\$15k per project
- Includes contractor work, in house crew work and work that can be executed by volunteers
- Projected project start - late April
- Almost all homeowners for this project have been identified

What do we need from you?

- Help with **application recruitment!**
 - Funding is not guaranteed beyond 2020 but if we want to apply for funding for 2021 we need show interest from the community
- For our **BaHN program** - local catering and local group interested in volunteering for the BaHN!
- **Needs Assessment** - local wrap around services



Dollar Bank

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Community Development




Home Works Home Loan

Dollar Bank
Since 1855
dollar.bank

The Perfect Solution
For Home Improvements

- Little or no home equity needed
- Low payments
- Extended terms



Tactics to preserve existing owner-occupied housing

- ▶ Maintaining owner-occupied homes
- ▶ Establishing a homebuyer pipeline
- ▶ Working with pre-qualified buyers and developers
- ▶ Sell to an owner occupied home buyer or organization that will renovate for homeownership

Coordinate a Robust Property Recycling Program

- Nearly one in five residential properties in McKees Rocks is vacant.
- Many of these properties are blighted and tax delinquent.
- To return vacant and tax-delinquent property to productive use, an appropriately scaled property recycling program is necessary.
- This program will incorporate several different tactics, including the use of Allegheny County's Vacant Property Recovery Program.



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
ALWAYS INSPIRING

Allegheny County Economic Development

McKees Rocks Vacant Property Town Hall
Jan. 8, 2020

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Allegheny Vacant Property Recovery Program (VPRP)

The purpose of the Allegheny Vacant Property Recovery Program is to acquire and clear the title to vacant, blighted properties and convey them to applicants who have developed a concrete reuse plan and demonstrated the capacity to implement it.

Property Eligibility

- Located in a participating municipality
- Vacant land or vacant structure
- At least 3 years tax delinquent

Applicant Eligibility

- Current on taxes, water, sewage, and refuse bills on all properties owned in Allegheny County
- No outstanding code violations or municipal liens on properties owned in Allegheny County

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

VPRP Pricing Structure McKees Rocks

	ex. Sideyard	ex. Rehab
Applicant's Share of Appraised Value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Side Yard Abutting Applicant's Primary Residence: 50% of appraised value Demolition of Blighted Structure: 100% of appraised value Rehabilitation of Blighted Structure: 100% of appraised value All Other Applications: 100% of appraised value 	\$500 (est. value \$1,000)	\$5,000
Good Faith Deposit \$166.75 or 10 percent of the estimated appraised value of the property for properties valued over \$2,000.00	\$166.75	\$500
Parcel Fee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Side Yard Abutting Applicant's Primary Residence: WAIVED Demolition of Blighted Structure: WAIVED Rehabilitation of Blighted Structure: \$1,400.00 All Other Applications: \$3,000.00 	Waived	\$1,400
Closing Costs (Average is \$500.00)	\$500.00	\$500.00
Estimated Total Purchase Price	\$1,166.75	\$7,400.00

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Wilkinsburg



Before



Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Wilkinsburg



After

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Homestead



Before



After

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Allegheny Home Improvement Loan Program

The Allegheny Home Improvement Loan Program provides Home Improvement Loans to eligible low-moderate income homeowners residing in Allegheny County to make emergency or general, non-emergency improvements to their homes.

- The home must be located in Allegheny County
- The home must be the applicant's principal residence and a residential single-family dwelling
- Applicant's total household income cannot exceed program income limits

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gross Income	\$64,350	\$73,550	\$82,700	\$91,900	\$99,250	\$106,600	\$113,950	\$121,300

- Two products:
 - General Improvement Loan, 1% interest, max \$23,000
 - Emergency/Priority Loan: 0% interest, 1 item, max \$10,000.

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Allegheny Home Improvement Loan Program



Before>After

Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Allegheny Home Improvement Loan Program



Before>After



Housing/Community Revitalization Programs for Consumers

Allegheny Lead Safe Homes Program

Eligibility:

- Household income under 80% AMI
- Homeowner or Renter (Renter's need LL's permission)
- Pre-1978 home
- Homeowners must have child under six year old living or visiting
- Renters not required to have child, but LL must prioritize renting to low-income families with children
- Identify Lead-Based Paint Hazards
- Hire Certified Contractor to repair identified Lead-based paint hazards (up to \$12,000 of work at no cost to family)

Capacity

Common threads among communities that have successfully addressed blight:

- ▶ Leveraged additional technical expertise
- ▶ Leveraged additional financial resources
- ▶ Implement a locally developed plan

There are several potential resources, including:

- ▶ **The Tri-Cog Land Bank**
- ▶ Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh
- ▶ City of Bridges
- ▶ Community Land Trust

Additionally, participation in the **Tri-Cog Land Bank** can help establish a pool of qualified prospective homeowners and developers.



TCLB

Tri-COG Land Bank

McKees Rocks: Vacant Property Town Hall

January 8, 2020

The central goal of a land bank is to mitigate blight and stimulate economic development by transferring properties that are vacant, abandoned, and tax delinquent back to productive use that benefits communities.

Mission

Our vision is to achieve sustainable communities free of blight and attractive to residents and businesses.

Vision

Our mission is to strategically restore investment in blighted properties to enhance community safety, value, and vibrancy.



Mercer Street



Priorities

Priorities of participating members = A Plan for the Place!

- Plans that are consistent with member economic development plans and priorities
- Neighborhood preservation, restoration and overall mitigation of blight
- Homeownership and affordable housing
- Returning properties to productive tax paying status
- Land assemblage for economic development
- Development of green infrastructure or public/community space

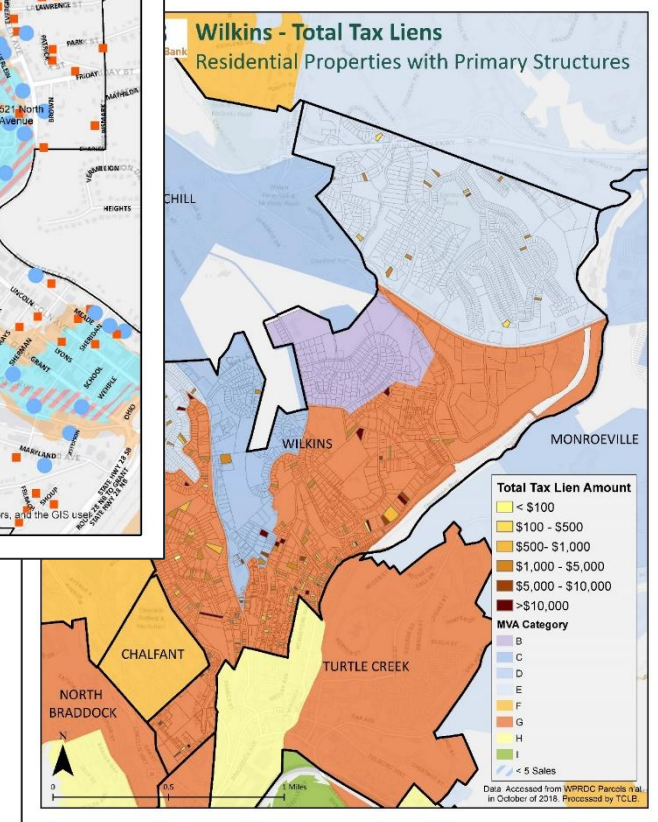
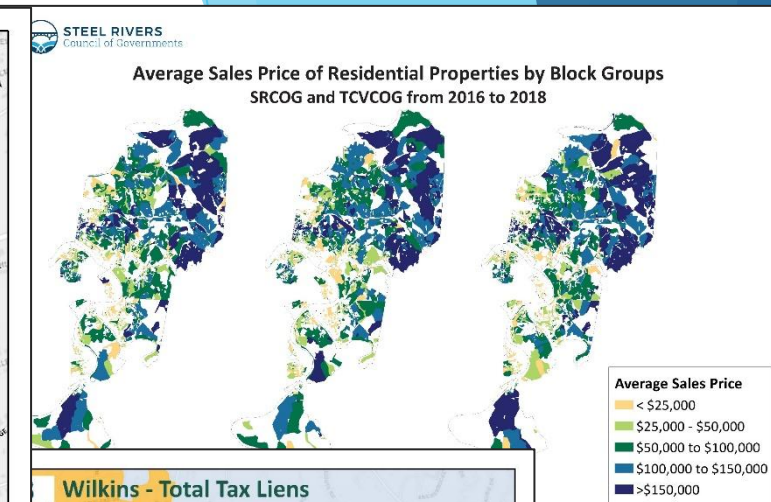
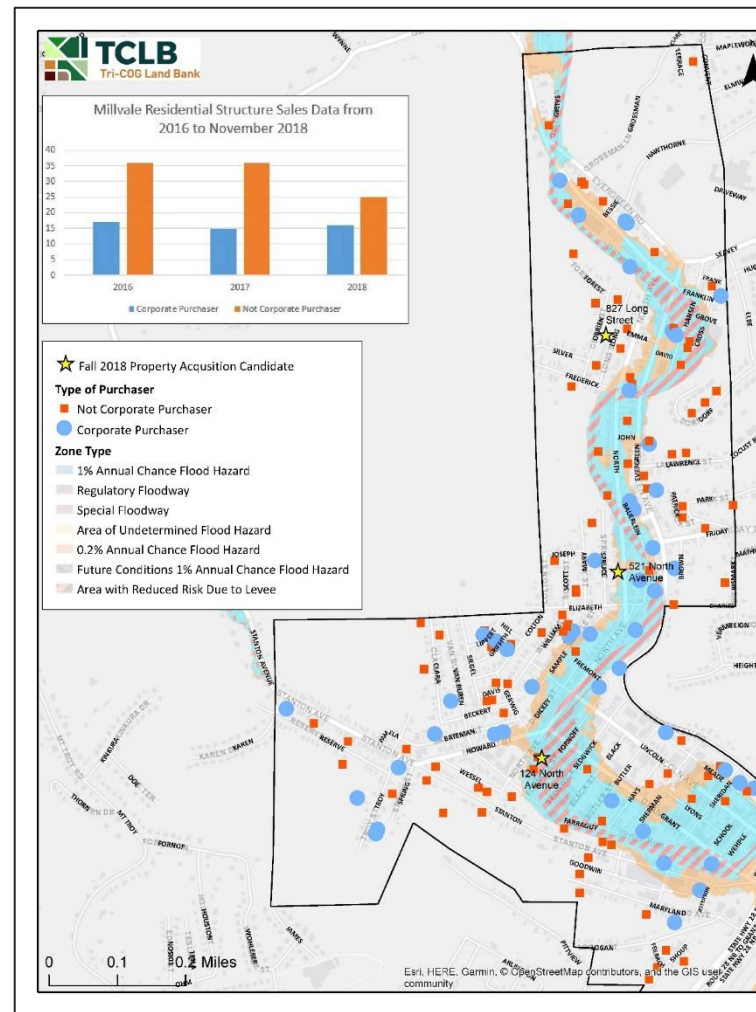
Data Driven Approach

With Open Data

Tax Liens
 Sheriff Sales
 Rent/Own
 Approximate length of homeownership
 Allegheny County Assessment Property Condition
 Commercial/Residential
 Lots without structures
 Demographic Data
 Sales Data

With Internal (Municipal) Data

Tax Delinquency
 Code Enforcement Violations
 Vacant/Abandoned Property
 Potential Demolition/Demolition Candidates



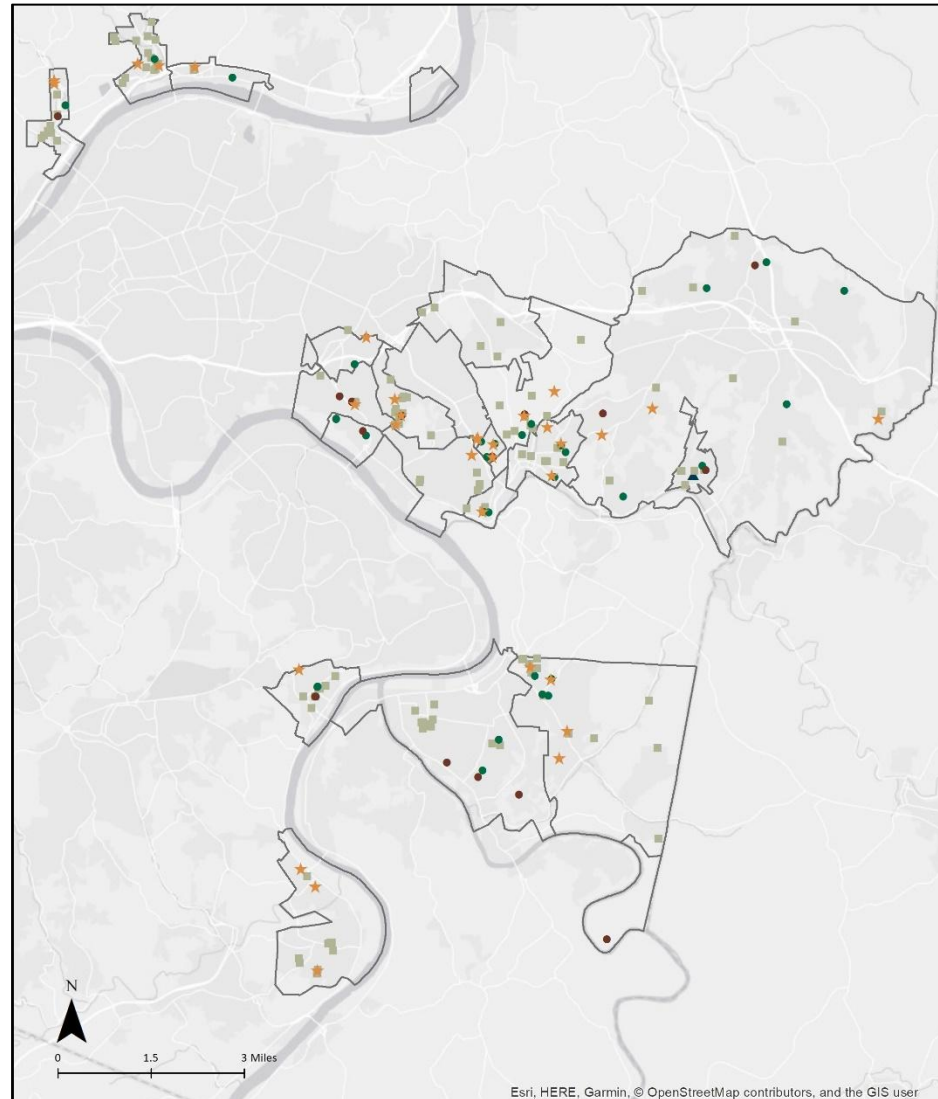
Members

Allegheny County
Six School Districts
22 Municipalities

Clairton City School District	Clairton
Fox Chapel School District	Blawnox, Sharpsburg
Gateway School District	Monroeville, Pitcairn
McKeesport Area School District	Dravosburg, McKeesport, South Versailles, White Oak
Shaler Area School District	Etna, Millvale
Woodland Hills School District	Braddock Hills, Chalfant, Churchill, East Pittsburgh, Edgewood, Forest Hills, North Braddock, Rankin, Swissvale, Turtle Creek, Wilkins

Property Summary

As of January 1, 2019



- Land Bank Footprint (211)
- TCLB Summary of Properties**
- ★ TCLB Owned (32)
- Scheduled for Acquisition (18)
- ▲ Target for Acquisition (1)
- Evaluation in Process (31)
- Reviewed (129)

Collaborations and Partnerships



Focused on a multi-pronged stabilization effort
in a neighborhood in Braddock Hills



Before



After RTP Cleanout



After Interior Demo

Allegheny County Conservation District
City of Bridges Community Land Trust
Conservation Consultants, Inc
Construction Junction

elevate 412
NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania
South Hilltop Men's Group
Steel Rivers Council of Governments

Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments

Priority Strategies: Property Recycling Program

Dealing with vacant property at-scale requires a complementary set of tools that acquire, clear title, and return the property to productive use.

Since the circumstances of each vacant property can vary significantly, there is no single mechanism or tool that works in every situation.

Priority Strategies: Property Recycling Program

Grounded Strategies:
[\(Click here for presentation\)](#)

Priority Strategies: Property Recycling Program

The property recycling process begins with **proactive and consistent code enforcement** and **tax collections**.

- ▶ Prevent properties from getting so bad that they are no longer economically viable to renovate.
- ▶ Signal to property owners that lack of maintenance and tax payments have consequences.

In this sense, code enforcement and tax collection are not only reactive tactics, but ***they are proactive as well.***

McKees Rocks CDC

The CDC plays an important role in recycling vacant property.

- ▶ Manage the “back-end” of the property recycling process
- ▶ Helps the Borough by diverting vacant properties (that might otherwise need to be demolished with tax dollars) to a privately funded renovation.
- ▶ Can hold property for redevelopment when the municipality can't



MCKEES ROCKS
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

Strategic Partners

The role of outside partners is to *implement* locally defined strategies, not to create them.

- ▶ Supplement the capacity that exists within McKees Rocks.
- ▶ Working together provides the opportunity to address the scale of the vacant property problem in McKees Rocks in a way that has real impact.

Next Steps: Housing Task Force

In order to communicate and share information across the entities working to implement McKees Rocks housing strategy, Palo Alto recommends the formation of a **Housing Task Force**.

- ▶ Who: Representation from the Borough, the CDC, and residents. Between 8 - 12 members.
- ▶ Role: To manage the implementation of the Work Plan, and share information between members.

MRCDC Downtown Development and Design Standards

- MRCDC owns several vacant properties in downtown McKees Rocks.
- The CDC is creating standards to inform responsible development.
- Large focus on community input.



MRCDC Downtown Development and Design Standards

- Development and Design Survey - coming soon!
- Public Development Standards Meeting
- Resident Development Workshops

More info to come!



**Please sign the sign-in
sheet before you leave!
Thank you!**