

# SOUTHERN COMPASS

**Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT)**  
**Area 3 – Southside 5-Year Plan**  
**Submitted By: APD Solutions REG**  
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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THE STUDY

In 1999, the City of Syracuse established Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT) to facilitate public input to government agencies, community organizations, philanthropic groups and private investors. Eight Neighborhood Planning Councils that corresponds to the city's eight planning areas were formed -- Downtown, Westside, Southside, Valley, Eastside, Eastwood, Northside, and Lakefront. TNT's founding mission was to create a comprehensive process that is accessible to and influenced by neighborhood residents, businesses and local organizations to shape the future of their community. In essence making tomorrow's neighborhoods possible because of the decisions being made today. This approach to planning helps direct the city's resources into priority areas in the most cost-effective way.

One of the main functions of each TNT sector is to create a five-year plan that would include a comprehensive vision for the diverse neighborhoods within the area, five-year goals and objectives, prioritized action steps, budgets, recommendations to operating city departments and timelines for completion. Each of the city's operating departments is supposed to take these plans into consideration as they create annual work plans and capital budgets. Although some believe these plans just collect dust, many neighborhoods are now updating their plans and crossing off things that were accomplished as a result of their long-term planning. Unfortunately, that's not the case for the Southside. TNT Area-3 - Southside is the only TNT sector that does not have a five-year neighborhood plan on record. Each community with a plan has experienced a noticeable improvement. This assessment project was commissioned to help the Southside get on the right track and experience similar progress as other areas of this city.

Southside TNT is comprised of 6 neighborhoods -- Brighton, Elmwood, Southside, Southwest, Strathmore, and Winkworth. This community envisions a future where it becomes a better place without eliminating the inherent human, cultural and historical value that is ingrained in what already exists.

This plan is designed to assist the community in eliminating the behaviors, distraction, discord and external threats that have led to disinvestment and a general deterioration of the quality of life. Through clarifying the assets, we hope to preserve that which should be cherished and jettison anything else that is a threat to our collective prosperity. This five-year plan looks to sustain the community as we grow and work to become a community of choice. Through the assistance of this plan, the Southside seeks to develop a place where we can join together as stakeholders to make positive things happen through our decisions and actions.

BRIGHTON ELMWOOD SOUTHSIDE  
SOUTHWEST STRATHMORE WINKWORTH









## USING A SOUTHERN COMPASS

Historically, when people lost their way, a compass was used as the best tool to find their way. The key to every compass is its needle, which is a tiny magnet designed to be attracted to the Earth's magnetic field. This gave explorers and those endlessly lost a reliable sense of direction. Most compasses only point north. Similarly, most development in Syracuse has been drawn to the northern districts and northern suburbs. This plan is conversely designed to show people the way to the Southside of the city and also how the Southside stakeholders can make this targeted area more magnetic. The magnetic draw ultimately will make these six neighborhoods more attractive and attract investment, people, and an improved quality of life.

A compass can only point you in the right direction. It cannot guarantee that you find your way. It takes the user to become focused on reading the signs and using other landmarks to navigate. This is why we've chosen to use an asset-based approach for this body of work. The assets we have worked to identify are these landmarks. The purpose of this five-year plan is to show adventurers and lost souls the way to this community and how to find an opportunity that leads to collective prosperity once they arrive.

## USING THIS PLAN

The Southside TNT five-year neighborhood plan provides an opportunity for the community to help shape and direct the pattern of growth and development within its boundaries. The goal is to develop a shared vision that is unique to the Southside by bringing together a range of community stakeholders. The Southside plan pinpoints strengths, assets, needs, and concerns. It embodies a vision defined by the community and recommends specific tactics and strategies to manifest that vision. Embracing the plan will help the six neighborhoods in multiple ways.

### THE SOUTHSIDE TNT PLAN WILL:

- *REFLECT CLEARLY WHAT THE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIRES FOR THE FUTURE.*
- *PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER REAL ESTATE DECISIONS.*
- *INFORM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTORS OF THE PRIORITIES SUITABLE FOR THE SOUTHSIDE.*
- *AND LASTLY, TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR INVESTMENT ACTIVITY.*





## METHOD OF APPROACH

It is clear that there are many underlying challenges found in the local housing market and workforce needs. This study's approach seeks to review the current dynamics impacting the Southside TNT neighborhoods and recommend action steps to fulfill a vision for change over the next 5 years. It is the first step in a process to create a series of recommendations and action-oriented strategies to shape public policy and create the most desired future. This plan is guided by the following objectives:

- To assess the depth and breadth of all six TNT Southside neighborhood areas (APDS evaluated the potential market for different types of neighborhoods).
- To evaluate the opinions and preferences of the local stakeholders regarding the current status of this area and future opportunity for improvement.
- To maximize the public and private financial and organizational resources available to improve the environment assisting the Southside in becoming a community of choice.
- To coordinate resource allocations in areas that will reinforce existing neighborhood strengths and mitigate documentable challenges.
- To leverage and expand both public and private financial investment.
- To digest the activities of housing, economic development, public improvements, private programs, and other services as a sum total to assist this community in concert, rather than as efforts in a silo.

With these objectives in mind, the APDS consultant team designed a comprehensive methodology to complete this project in four phases. Each is summarized and illustrated by the diagram below:

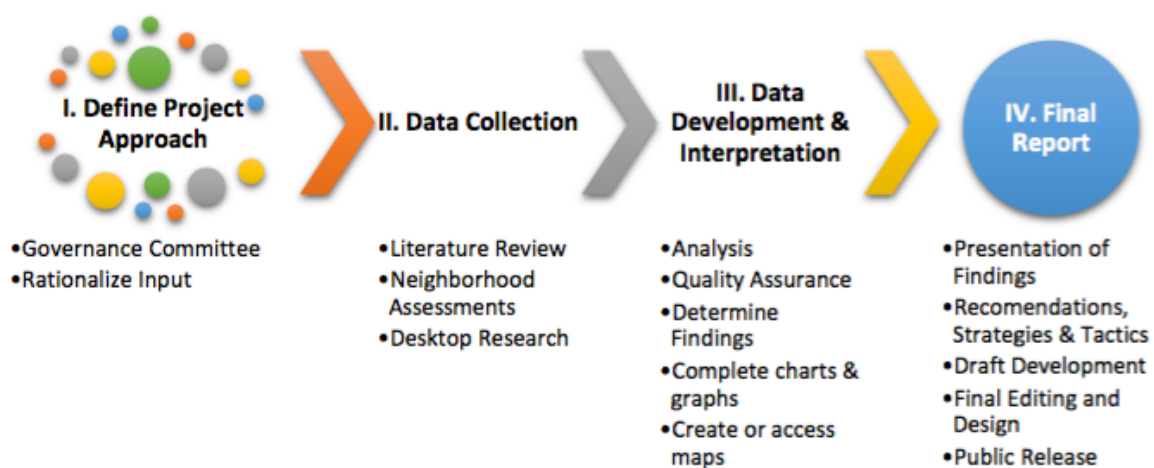


Figure 1



Through experience in neighborhood redevelopment and economic development strategies, APDS has an unparalleled perspective into the intricacies of navigating the needs of the Southside TNT. APDS analyzed and assessed the area's key resources and influences that impact the community's stability. For this project, the consultant team used an Asset-Based approach that focuses on community-driven development. This work seeks not only to identify areas of concern but also to recognize things of value that already exist in TNT Southside and link those assets to the larger socio-economic environment.

The recommendations will be driven from the inside out instead of providing a laundry list for outside entities. The five-year action plan will augment the inherent assets by mobilizing individuals, organizations and institutions to galvanize as a planning unit.

Comparable neighborhood characteristics were evaluated to provide observations on each neighborhood area's competitive position and future potential. The key to this approach is to start with what already exists as a base and not simply covet the formula of other neighborhoods.

The analysis addressed general economic and demographic traits, historical context, anecdotal input, and general market characteristics such as employment/job-share and real estate values. This final five-year plan also includes results from the community input survey, 6 neighborhood profiles, a vacancy analysis, land use information and literature review of over 30 studies/plans/articles.

The consultant team began the project in June 2016 with the initiation of community workshops. The team then completed a neighborhood tour and formed a Project Governance Team of community stakeholders.

The next major step was completing a neighborhood-based demographic/economic analysis. Between July and October, the web-based survey was conducted, which included a representative sample of 165 respondents.

All data collected was compiled and analyzed leading to this final report being presented in January 2018.





## THE EVOLUTION OF SYRACUSE AND THE SOUTHSIDE

Syracuse has always been about connectivity. City leaders were visionary when they negotiated bringing the Erie Canal through the city connecting New York with the Midwest. The diversity of Central New York is based on the German, Irish and Italian immigrants seeking work on the canal construction and subsequent commerce. During that same period, Syracuse also became well known to African-Americans as a key stop on the Underground Railroad. Decades later, more would be recruited from the South for jobs in the factories.

Syracuse has had three major expansions:

- Salt Industry and Erie Canal Development
- Industrialization and Manufacturing
- Life Sciences, Meds, and Eds

During the early 1900s, Syracuse was the manufacturing mecca of New York and indeed the country. There was one point when more things were manufactured in Syracuse than in New York City. To put it in its proper context, the Syracuse of that time was equivalent to the Austin I-35 corridor today. At its productive height, 87 different industries called Syracuse home. They were primarily centered along Erie Boulevard and secondarily along the Onondaga Lake shore.

In 1909 there were 305 manufacturers with 537 different factories. Visionary leadership sustained that climate, and by 1939 there were over 300 distinct products made in Syracuse.

The Southside neighborhoods began to develop and expand during this period due to the use of streetcars and access to automobiles. It allowed families to live further away from the city center as the Southside neighborhoods became the bedroom community for these workers. As prosperity came, workers could afford to live further away from the factories. The earlier neighborhoods were built along Salina Street because it was in the valley and a flat spine at a similar grade to Downtown and Erie Boulevard. The homes developed up Onondaga Hill (starting with Strathmore's development) were larger structures and on bigger lots due to the increased expense of transporting materials. This was not only the peak of the city economically, but it was also a Golden Age of Commerce for what we now call the Southside.

Development in Greater Syracuse has always come through the industry. The city population began to shift as families moved toward the new factories in the suburbs. For example, Syracuse was the first Silicon Valley built around the technology of the time, the transistor, and semi-conductor. In 1948-51, GE built Electronics Park, a 150-acre research and development





campus, which was not only the world headquarters for R&D but also a primary manufacturing site. All technology surrounding radio, radar, televisions and other similar equipment were managed at Electronics Park. This began the expansion of suburbs like Liverpool that ultimately led to a multi-decade exodus from Syracuse as the city population declined. As workers moved closer to the suburban jobs, their previous neighborhoods of choice, such as the Southside, began to spiral in the transition.

This transformation of the Southside tenure led to new groups migrating into the area. The availability of housing in the Southern neighborhoods allowed previous owners, occupants and landlords the economic opportunity to relocate. It also provided city leaders with a viable location to move in-town residents to make way for urban renewal and the downtown revitalization. Prior to the advent of urban renewal, African-American families in Syracuse were largely restricted to living in the 15th Ward, an area near the center of the city. The neighborhood was racially mixed, as other ethnic groups were also centered there. Until the late 1960s, it was difficult for African-Americans to find property owners in other parts of the city who were willing to rent or sell to them. With the decline in population, the Southside, Brighton, and

Southwest neighborhood property owners became more amenable to accepting minority residents. The residents weren't the only part of the transition from the 15th Ward to the Southside neighborhoods. Tenant and landlord behaviors also migrated. There is a generational connection between landlords, tenants, and home repairs. Despite the loving and nurturing environment in the 15th Ward, history has well documented the conditions of the properties located there. Poor performing landlords who shifted the responsibility for repairs to the tenants owned many of the real estate assets. Often, the African-American families would not just patch and paint, but remodel aspects of the property through personal labor. The downside of making the properties nicer was the landlords would not reward the tenants for improving their properties. Instead many families reported their rents being raised because the apartments were improved. Worse still, others recount being evicted so that the landlord could rent to new tenants at higher lease rates. The lesson learned was that there was no benefit in keeping the property in good condition. That response to discrimination and mistreatment was handed down as learned behavior through generations, and the resulting trauma continues to manifest itself in our neighborhoods today.





# THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In the process of completing this plan, APDS reviewed a number of recent economic development reports, housing studies, market profiles, strategic and comprehensive plans, and news articles. In total, over 30 items were included in our literature review.

These documents were written by consulting firms, housing organizations, urban planners, local advocates, media representatives, and other parties. Many of the studies had the same stated purpose and appeared to be a result of an earlier work not being implemented or properly funded.

The literature review revealed the following common views:

- A strong desire to increase homeownership
- Clear support for preserving and improving the existing housing stock
- Consistent emphasis on eliminating blight
- Various discussions about approaches to stabilizing neighborhoods
- Urging to bring more jobs, amenities and economic development to the area

In an effort to provide a broader background of the Syracuse Southside redevelopment history, the consultant team has decided to present an overview of a handful of important bodies of work. Each not only includes an overview of the study but also indications of any outcomes found to date.



## SYRACUSE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE (SNI) - 1999

The Syracuse Neighborhood Initiative (SNI) was a project that began in 1999 thanks to Congressman James Walsh securing federal funds to renew the city's neighborhoods in a measurable, effective, and lasting way. Thirty-six million dollars was dedicated to neighborhood revitalization projects with \$10.5 million to be secured in future rounds. The SNI funds were channeled through the City of Syracuse during Mayor Matthew Driscoll's administration.

### The Goals of SNI:

1. Homeownership
2. Broader Tax Base
3. Increasing Housing Values
4. Attractive, Stable Neighborhoods

This initiative worked closely with community organizations including TNT. Other institutions joined in the efforts by matching the initial grant with private funding in the form of loans and donations including the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp. and Enterprise Foundation. Other partnerships behind this effort included Byrne Dairy, Carrier, NeighborWorks, Bristol Meyers, Time Warner, SU, Niagara Mohawk, King + King Architects, etc.

This was one of the most significant investments in the Southside over the last 20 years. Over 8 million dollars went into the TNT Area 3 – Southside boundaries:

➤ SYRACUSE MODEL NEIGHBORHOOD CORPORATION ASTRO HOMES - \$810,000

➤ REHAB AND DEMOS - \$1,235,305

➤ SOUTHSIDE HOUSING PACKAGE CANNON-NEWELL - \$2,130,000

➤ ADMIN - \$194,652

➤ SOUTH SALINA STREET NEIGHBORHOOD - \$2,290,000

➤ DUNBAR CENTER - \$250,000

➤ SHADY WILLOWS - \$1,750,000

➤ SOUTHEAST GATEWAY CDC - \$50,000

**TOTAL: \$8,709,957**





The Southside received most of the SNI money, followed by: Northside - \$6,600,926; Westside - \$6,398,104; Lakefront - \$1,276,682; Downtown - \$1,573,068; Valley - \$261,254; Eastwood - \$226,690; Eastside - \$3,125,398; Citywide - \$7,300,000.

The long-term results of this initiative on the Southside supports the trend of investment and initiatives on the Southside not producing the desired results to bring the neighborhood out of despair and into prosperity. Almost 20 years later, and the over-arching goals set out by this initiative are still to be desired on the Southside.

For example, the Shady Willows project garnered \$1,750,000 dollars for the site work and the demolition of the substandard apartment complex along Onondaga Creek with the intent of replacing it with a green housing development centered on Southside Academy Charter School. However, the new development never surfaced, and the lot sat vacant for over 10 years until the Brady Faith Center purchased the land for their urban farm in 2016. The Southeast Gateway CDC is now defunct. The rehab and demos have not made a large enough impact to stabilize the neighborhood because the investment was spread out and not in one concentrated area. Even projects like the \$2.1 million dollar Southside Cannon-Newell Housing Project suffers from surrounding blight and progressive deterioration.

## NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY AREA (NRSA) PLAN – MAY 2011

The Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area Plan designated the Northeast Area and the Southwest Area for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to promote the revitalization of those areas. It identified the Southwest strategy area along the boundaries of the Syracuse Urban Renewal Area which covers much of the West, Southwest, and Southside of the city, including all or part of the following neighborhoods: Park Ave, Near Westside, Skunk City, Southwest, Southside, Elmwood, and Brighton. It identified the Southwest NRSA as having a population of 28,310 (60% Black, 25% White, and 16.5% Hispanic); 62.6% of the children living below the poverty level; an unemployment rate of 16.2%; 66.8% renters versus 33.2% homeowners; a 37.1% vacancy rate; and 1/3 of the population without a high school diploma.

This plan developed broad community objectives and key strategies to help improve the quality of life and transform these areas into places where people desire to live, work, and play. The goal was to reinvest in the human and economic capital, and economically empower low-income residents as part of an overall community revitalization strategy. The key strategy areas included Housing and Neighborhood Development, Infrastructure, Public Safety, Code Enforcement, Zoning and Land Use, and Economic Development. Empowerment strategies included the preservation and rejuvenation of Syracuse housing stock through repair improvement and rehabilitation of existing buildings, encouragement of residents to remain and invest in upkeep and improvement of their homes, and the promotion and enhancement of the image of Syracuse. Objectives included in this plan were to



decrease violent crime, increase homeownership, ensure an adequate supply of decent, affordable housing options, reduce blight, strengthen the neighborhood economic corridors, expand recreation options, and align the city's capital improvement budget with neighborhood planning efforts to leverage planned investment.

Key challenges identified in the plan included property abandonment, a large number of vacant buildings and land, and a housing stock that continues to age and deteriorate. The plan cited the city as a whole continues to struggle with high unemployment and poverty rates which are attributed to the city's population decline, loss of business and industry, the recession, and other economic conditions.

The plan identified Kings Park Landing, the South Salina Street Historic District, and Syracuse Housing Authority's scattered site development as major neighborhood revitalization projects. The Kings Park Landing and the South Salina Street Historic District was a collaborative effort between Home HeadQuarters, Syracuse Model Neighborhood Corporation, and Housing Visions Unlimited to revitalize the neighborhood with a mix of new construction, rehabilitation, demolition, home improvement block blitzes, and homeowner assistance.

Despite the efforts of the City of Syracuse, in cooperation with neighborhood organizations, housing agencies, and other stakeholders, the Southside continues to struggle with abandoned and ill-maintained lots and buildings. This was one of many attempts at improving the Southside on a large scale without the desired success. Although some benchmarks are being met such as the establishment of the citywide Rental Registry and the Re-Zone Syracuse initiative, most of the benchmarks still remain unmet. It's been over 15 years since this plan was created and the neighborhood challenges and priorities are still the same.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ATLAS

Articles regarding the Midland Sewage Treatment Plant in the Southwest neighborhood support the argument by some community members of being treated unfairly by the government. Southside residents fought hard against the treatment plant coming to the area by organizing and going so far as to the EPA's Office of Civil Rights to fight it, but to no avail. Forty-five townhomes were seized forcing the eviction of 35 African-American families; jobs promised to the residents were few and far between; and other neighborhoods outside of the Southside received a portion of the community benefit funding from the Midland Treatment Facility being placed on the Southside. Although treatment plants were planned for these other neighborhoods, they never came to fruition.

The community benefit funds from the Midland Treatment Plant were distributed among the following projects:



- **Midland-Lincoln-Bellevue**

This project, located in the Southwest neighborhood, was allocated \$3 million to implement the program and revitalize the aging housing stock. The initiative contributed funding for acquisition and development of the Southwest Community Farm and for mechanical improvements to the Southwest Community Center.

- **Skunk City Community Initiative**

The Skunk City neighborhood on the city's west side received \$2 million in Community Initiative funding to revitalization efforts including mini- grants, home improvement loans, and the rehabilitation of several properties.

- **Sackett Tract Community Initiative**

This Sackett Tract Community Initiative project, located in the Westside's Park Avenue neighborhood received \$1 million in Community Initiative funding for mini-grants and loans for homeowners and investors, park improvements, and commercial façade grants.

## **SYRACUSE THEN AND NOW ([WWW.SYRACUSETHENANDNOW.ORG](http://WWW.SYRACUSETHENANDNOW.ORG))**

The Syracuse Then and Now website is dedicated to highlighting the history and historic architecture of Syracuse. It highlights two areas of the Southside for its historic significance -- South Salina Street Historic District and the Strathmore "By The Park" development. The website describes the South Salina Street Historic District as "an architecturally and historically significant collection of residential, commercial and religious buildings." The district encompassed the historic core of what was originally the Village of Danforth and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. The district goes from West Kennedy Avenue to West Borden Street.

Strathmore "By the Park" was a residential development created in 1919 in the Strathmore neighborhood just southwest of Upper Onondaga Park. Several homes are identified for their historic architecture and relevance. The leading local architects of that time are highlighted such as Ward Wellington Ward, Merton Granger, and Melvin King. The history of the Strathmore neighborhood and South Salina Street's historic designation provides an opportunity to further market and promote the Southside's assets. The demolition of the Gothic Cottage and New Jerusalem Church within the South Salina Street Historic District further demonstrates how some parts of the Southside are still experiencing decline due to the deterioration of its properties and consequently more vacant lots and lost treasures.





## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) 2017-2022**

The Capital Improvement Program is a six-year capital allocation prepared and administered by the City's Office of Management and Budget. The program lists capital improvements slated for the Southside community to include the South Avenue Streetscape project, Onondaga Creekwalk, the Elmwood Park Mill Building, replacement of the Kirk Park Bridge, McKinley Park playground, renovation of the city schools, the Southwest Community Center, Strathmore-Elmwood Neighborhood Greenway, and the development of the Onondaga Botanical Garden and Arboretum.

The TNT ordinance states that the TNT neighborhood plans are supposed to influence the budgets of the city's departments. Without the Southside TNT having a plan on record, the allocation of the CIP funds further exemplifies the disconnection between the Southside community and the city government.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT -- FINAL -- SECOND ANNUAL ACTION PLAN, YEAR 42 (MAY 1, 2016 – APRIL 30, 2017)**

The City of Syracuse Department of Neighborhood & Business Development (NBD) is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to submit an annual Action Plan that corresponds with the City of Syracuse's Five-Year Consolidated Plan. The plan serves as a strategic planning tool for the implementation of HUD entitlement grant funds including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Grant (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. President Gerald Ford through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as an effort to combat poverty and urban blight enacted the Community Development Block Grant Program in 1974.

The Southside Allocations for CDBG funds for Year 42 included:

1. Dunbar Association – Youth Services Program - \$12,000
2. Jubilee Homes – Workforce and Southwest Neighborhood - \$62,200
3. Southside Interfaith – Farm Fresh Mobile Food Market - \$95,450
4. SMNC – Rental Rehab – Admin and Repair Assistance - \$300,000
5. SMNF – Southwest Community Center - \$365,000

Home Headquarters is allocated the majority of the \$4,566,169 in CDBG funds receiving over 40% for its programs and the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development received 20% for administration.



## SYRACUSE NEAR SOUTHSIDE PLANNING STUDY – SUMMER 2004

The Syracuse Near Southside Planning Study was conducted by the City of Syracuse Department of Community Development and the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF). The project focused on the geographic boundaries from Adams Street on the north, Interstate 81 on the east, Brighton Avenue on the south and Onondaga Creek on the west, and was a follow up to the 1999 Southeast Gateway Urban Design Study.

The purpose of this project was to address issues of connectivity, coherence, and function in the community's landscape. The report addressed five locations in the Near Southside Neighborhood: Martin Luther King Gateway & Castle Street Corridor; Sears Building Triangle; Kirk Park Gateway; Billings Park Gateway; and the Wallie Howard Plaza and New Africa Crossroads.

The key issues indicated were empty lots/vacant buildings, blank walls, low population density, poor physical connection to Downtown, and no apparent connection to University Hill. The challenges were the perception of violence, lack of public safety, and an older housing stock. The opportunities indicated were the active citizens and community organizations and the well-articulated community needs.

**Sears Building Triangle:** The plan calls for the renovation of the former Sears building for office, industrial, entrepreneurial incubation or training activities and includes the construction of up to five new buildings and a retail complex at the northwest corner of West Castle and Salina Street.

**Kirk Park Gateway:** The Kirk Park Gateway would connect the Near Southside, Southwest, and Strathmore communities through the development of the Onondaga Botanical Garden and Arboretum.

**Billings Park Gateway:** The Billings Park Gateway, at the intersection of Salina, Adams, and Warren Street, would connect the Near Southside community to Downtown. Some of the suggested improvements include putting a traffic light at the Warren and Salina Street split, a dense line of street trees, narrowing of Warren Street, and the placement of black granite columns on the SE and SW corners of Adams Street to act as an announcement of a change in the neighborhood.

**Wallie Howard Plaza:** The Wallie Howard Plaza is the intersection of Salina Street and Brighton Avenue. Recommendations call for a new public park in the parking lot that includes pedestrian access to existing stores, a park pavilion and trees, shrubs, flowering plants, park furnishings and a new commercial structure at the south end of the park, facing the intersection of Salina and East Brighton.

**MLK Plaza Gateway:** The MLK Plaza area suggests connecting the Near Southside to University Hill. Some of the suggestions included extending the residential elements of University Hill and creating a community marketplace and/or farmers market on the Southside of Castle Street between I-81 and the rail line.





## SOUTHEAST GATEWAY / KINGS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN PLAN SUMMER 2006

The Southeast Gateway / Kings Park Neighborhood Design Plan presents a vision for a new neighborhood commercial and residential center along the South Salina Street corridor from Adams to East Castle Street. This mixed-used infill development would be aligned with a variety of shops, stores, businesses, and restaurants at street level, with residential and office space above. Retail suggestions included a grocery store, pharmacy, national retail chain, seafood restaurant, food court, hardware store, and social services housed in the Sears building. The Southeast Gateway Neighborhood Community Development Corporation with the help of the Urban Design Center of Syracuse generated the design and vision for this neighborhood center concept. This study built upon previous work done through a community charrette in 1999 and a Gateway Report released in 2000. This study was also influenced by the 2005 MetroEdge market analysis study and was commissioned by NeighborWorks America which concluded about \$43 million dollars leaves the South Salina Street trade area which has a high population density and 10 times more buying power per square mile compared to Onondaga County. It has been over 10 years since this plan was created and the project still has not come to fruition. However, the area is still prime for this type of development due to the high number of vacant lots and underutilized properties in the area.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040

The Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2040 is a citywide plan that contains the vision for the future of Syracuse in relation to its policies, actions, regulations, and investments. Since the plans are no longer area specific, the City of Syracuse's Comprehensive Plan relies on each TNT sector's five-year plan. However, TNT plans are outdated, or in the case of TNT Area 3 – Southside, a five-year plan does not exist. Specific components of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan include bicycle infrastructure; historic preservation; land use & development; public art; and sustainability. Many of the goals in the Comprehensive Plan align with those of the Southside community such as its housing, public safety, capital facility improvements, cultural assets and economic development components.

The goals of the plan are to promote the use of city-owned venues, parks and open spaces for arts, heritage and culture-related festivals and events; the preservation and restoration of historic park attributes; revitalize neighborhood business corridors; encourage homeownership; support grassroots neighborhood beautification efforts; encourage the maintenance and improvement of existing housing stock; improve public safety within city neighborhoods; and use appropriately designed and placed signage to identify distinct areas within the city. TNT Southside can and should be a vehicle to assist the city in accomplishing many of its objectives including establishing park associations to help maintain and enhance park facilities and services; make public art a community priority in Syracuse; identify Syracuse's neighborhood business corridors; develop ways to celebrate the heritage and cultural resources in our immediate community; and conduct a needs assessment to determine changing recreation needs of city residents. Having the knowledge of what's in the city's plan can be of assistance in holding the city accountable and helping TNT Southside work with the city more cohesively in accomplishing mutual goals and priorities, and to get support in the areas outlined.



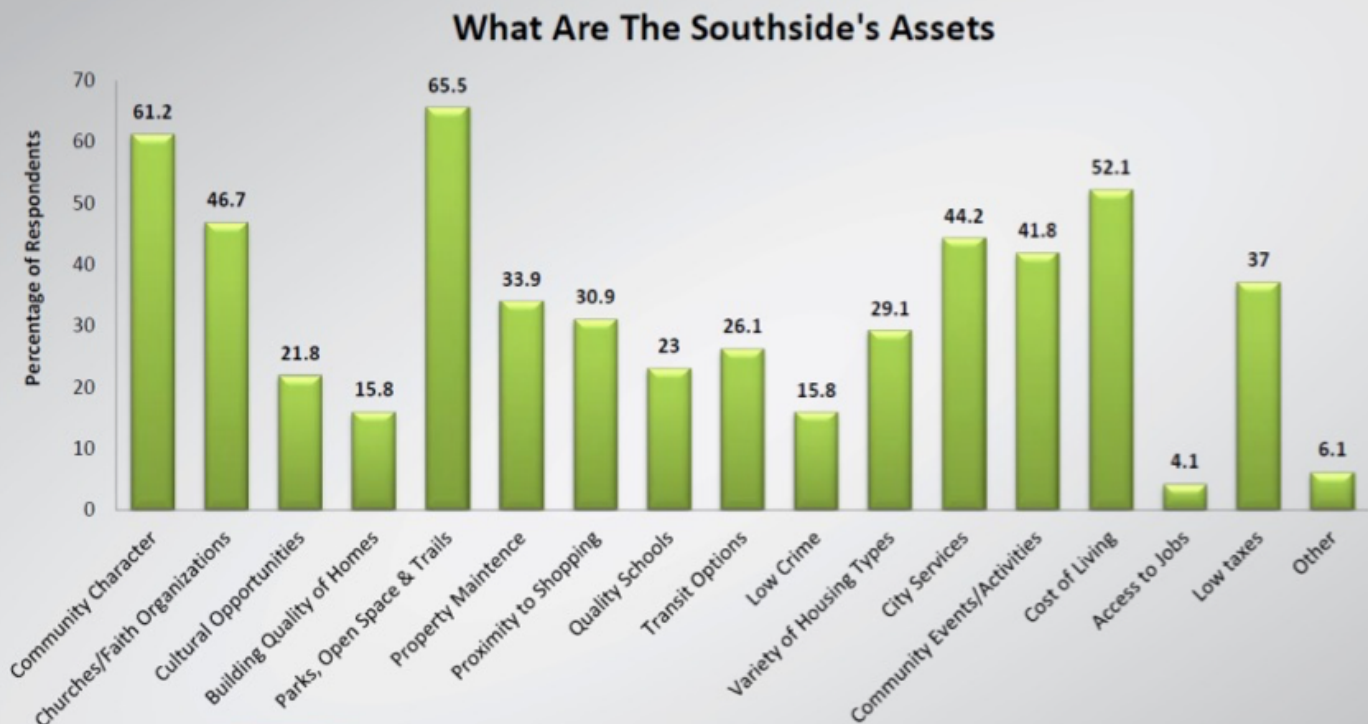


## COMMUNITY SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

The residents and stakeholders of this community have many opinions, and the consultant team captured them through a direct survey. The target population was the Southside TNT residents. The objective of this survey was to gather information about the decision points of the diverse households in the six neighborhoods and to identify various concerns. Initially, responses were slow, but through extending the deadline and implementing the use of paper surveys, participation increased greatly. The survey respondents felt very strongly that the Southside was rich with assets. Chief among those was the existence of parks, open space, and trails where 65.5% of respondents identified this as the primary asset. This selection was closely followed by community character where 61.2% of responses made this the second most selected response. Third in this list was the cost of living where 52.1% of respondents selected this as a top asset. The other selections can be found in the following graph.







Graph 1

Of the questions asked the survey participants, there was none more important than identifying their concerns. This of course wasn't only significant in identifying areas needing improvement, but the consultant team used it as the framework for this plan. The top concerns were further analyzed, and the recommendation section is correlated to these responses. There were 13 issues that were acknowledged as concerns from the survey, of those there were a few that clearly rose above others. The top factors of concern were crime, abandoned property, unsupervised youth, and public education. Since respondents were able to select multiple concerns the data collected was converted into an index rating system.



## Community Stakeholder Concerns

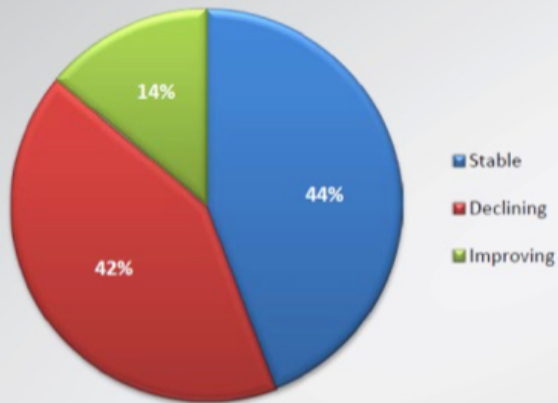


Graph 2

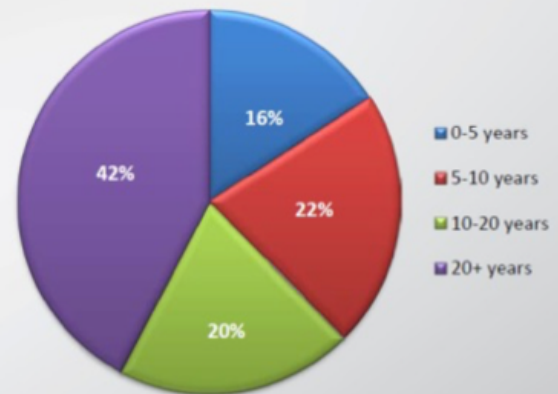
In observing graph #2 above, respondents identified crime and drugs as the number one concern with a 290 rating. Surprisingly to some, the unsupervised youth was the second highest rating at 259, only slightly above vacant and abandoned property at a 258 rating. Public education had a 253 rating and jobs and unemployment at 229 rounded out the top 5. With the assets and concerns of the Southside identified, the respondents were helpful in drilling down further into their sense of neighborhood status and their general mood. When asked about their impressions regarding neighborhood stability, 44% of the residents felt it is currently stable. Conversely, nearly an equal amount, 42% of the residents viewed the status as declining. Finalizing the results, the remaining 14% viewed the community as improving. The good news here is that nearly 60% of respondents believed the community is not moving in the wrong direction. The bad is over 40% feel the opposite.





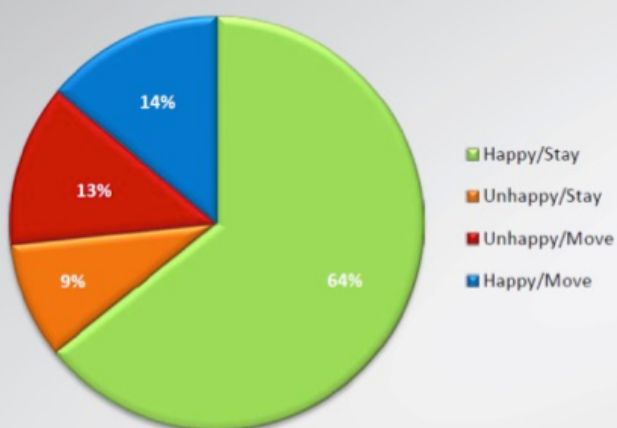
**Perception of Neighborhood Status**

Graph 3

**Tenure of Residency**

Graph 4

It is essential to understand if the respondents sharing these impressions have observed the neighborhood long enough to qualify their views. The data shows 42% of the residents have lived in this community for more than 20 years; 20% of the population has been around for at least 10 years but not more than 20 years; 22% have lived here for at least 5 years; and only 16% has been living in a Southside neighborhood for less than 5 years. With 62% of respondents living in the community for more than 10 years, it indicates that there is ample base of experience to make a quality assessment of the Southside. It also shows there is a tremendous amount of vesting in the six neighborhoods.

**Resident Mood & 5 Year Plans**

Graph 5

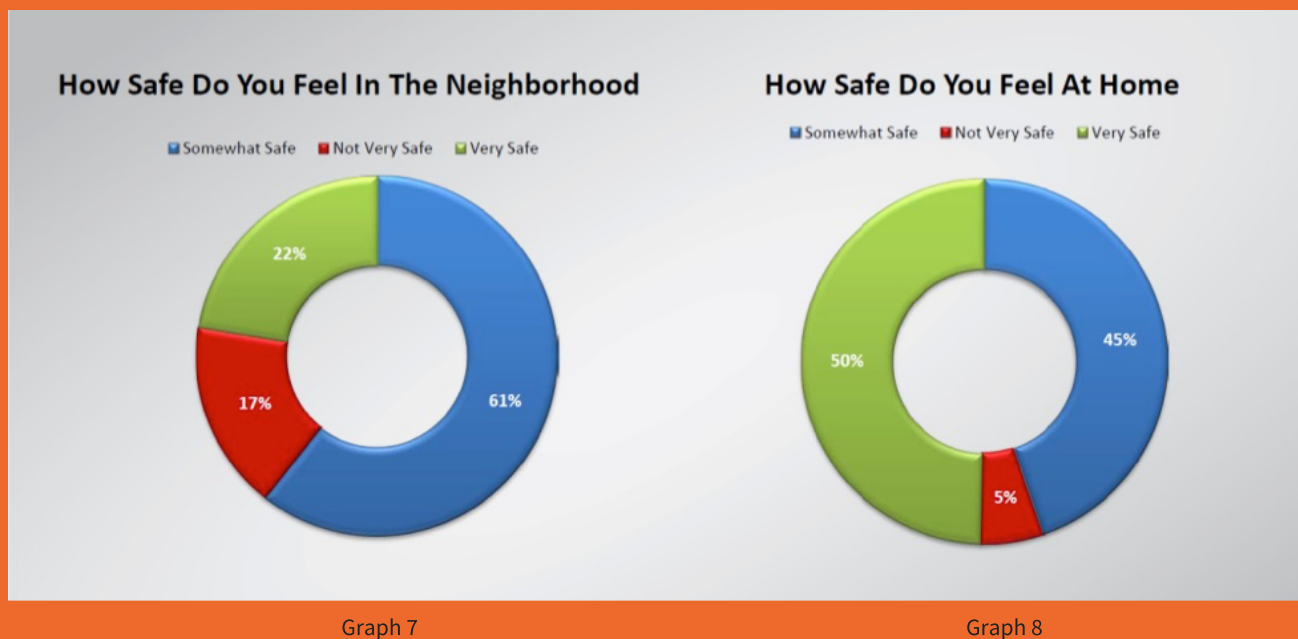
**Reasons You Would Move**

Graph 6



With details on tenure established, the survey was then designed to extract what the resident mood is, and their plans over the next 5 years. The data reveals 64% of the residents are happy with living on the Southside and plan to stay. There is a small minority of 9% who are unhappy but plan to remain living in the community. An area of focus must be placed on the remaining 27% who are planning to move within the next 5 years. That group is almost equally split (13% happy, 14% unhappy). Losing 13% of the population who is happy with the community indicates further need to clarify their motivations. In graph 6, those reasons are detailed.

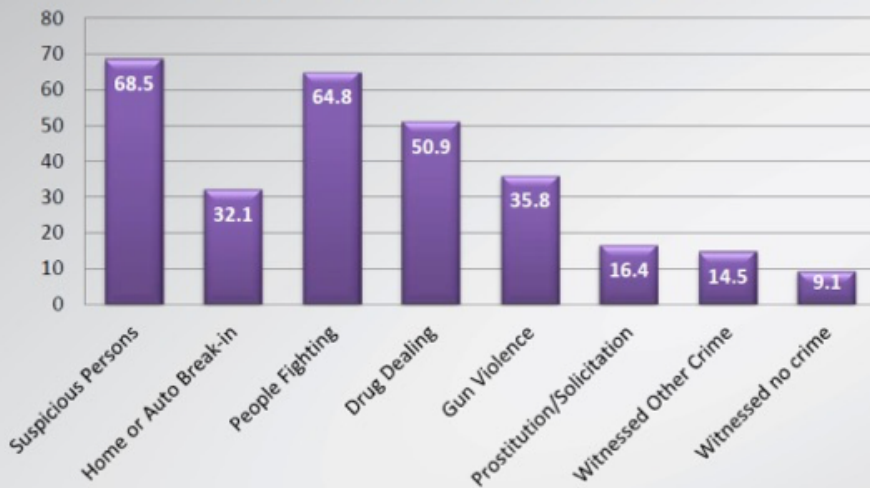
Fifty-four percent are concerned about crime and safety making that the primary motivating factor for resident mobility. Twenty-five percent of those determined to move are concerned about quality of life, and 11.5% are driven by how they feel about their neighbors or neighborhood itself. Thirty-six percent of respondents are moving not due to the community itself but because of property related reasons. Seventeen percent of those are stirred to relocate due to the age of the property. This could speak to obsolete features or concerns about maintenance costs. Twenty-five percent are looking for a larger or smaller size property.



Since crime factored so heavily in the decision to relocate, the consultant team extracted the sub-responses specific to crime. When asked about their sense of safety in their homes or neighborhood, their responses were revealing. The respondents shared 45% feel somewhat safe in their homes versus 61% feel somewhat safe in the neighborhood. Fifty percent feel very safe in their homes as compared to 22% feeling very safe in the neighborhood. Only 5% feel unsafe in their home while 17% don't feel safe in the neighborhood.

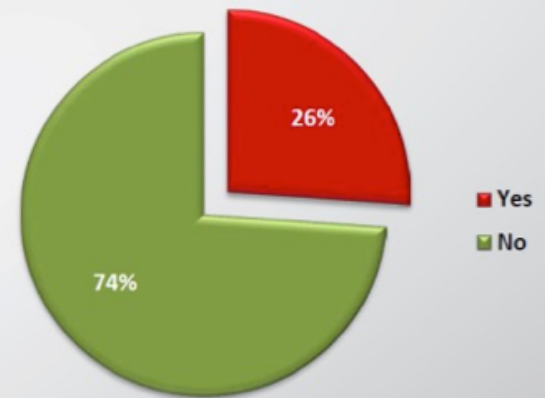




**Crime Witnessed In Last Year**

Graph 9

There are a number of complex underlying factors regarding crime revealed by respondents as 26% of them revealed that they were victims of a crime in the neighborhood during the last year. In addition to 1 of every 4 respondents being victimized, vast majorities of the respondents have witnessed various crimes, which clearly leads to a further sense of lack of safety. Nearly 65% of respondents have

**A Victim of Crime During the Last Year**

Graph 10

seen people fighting in public in the neighborhood. Almost 51% have personally witnessed drug dealing in the neighborhood. Approximately 69% have observed suspicious persons. Just less than one-third of respondents (32.1%) have witnessed home or automobile break-ins. Only 9.1% of those surveyed have not witnessed a crime in the last 12 months.

