

# Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization

## Logan Park Neighborhood Association Problem Properties

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**CURA RESOURCE COLLECTION**

**Center for Urban and Regional Affairs  
University of Minnesota  
330 Humphrey Center**

**Logan Park Neighborhood Association  
Problem Properties**

Conducted on behalf of Logan Park Neighborhood Association  
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## **I. Executive Summary**

The central goal of the Logan Park Neighborhood Association problem properties project is to identify the problem properties and construct a database for cataloging the properties. The main objective is to gain background information on the various properties to substantiate the units to be considered problems. An examination of property tax information, tax delinquency, housing violations, police calls, rental registration, and utility shut-off provides the background information included in the study.

The findings supported many of the problem properties identified by the housing committee. Also, the housing committee focused their attention onto the drive-by rating indicated by the initial driving survey and the properties classified as the worst (1.0), pretty bad (1.5), bad (2.0).

## **II. Introduction**

Logan Park neighborhood is located in Northeast Minneapolis. The neighborhood lies between Washington Street and Central Avenue on the west and east, and to the north and south of Nineteenth Avenue and Broadway Street. The neighborhood consists of approximately 500 residential structures, which includes a large percentage of duplexes. Most of the housing stock in Logan Park is pre-dated around the 1920's, and boasts of beautiful hardwood floors and wood-work (Logan Park Neighborhood NRP Action Plan September 1, 1998 pp1).

The neighborhood comprises a mixture of low income housing, as well as, a generous stock of affordable housing for middle income persons. Logan Park neighborhood maintains a sound community connection with the park providing activities and recreation for the whole neighborhood, along with, the neighborhood association supporting the overall wellness of the community.

With an abundant stock of houses pre-dating the 1920's, approximately twenty percent of the 500 residential units are of concern to the Logan Park Neighborhood Association housing committee. The housing committee has identified around ninety problem properties in Logan Park. This plan of action coincides with the neighborhood's NRP housing plan.

### **III. Logan Park's Housing Plan**

The main goal the housing committee seeks to create is an overall balance in the housing stock. The Logan Park NRP housing plan contains three main objectives, which aid in the primary goal. The first is to increase property values by improving homes. The housing committee plans to support a low interest loan and a matching grant program for exterior improvements. The second objective is to reclaim problem properties by assisting with capital funds to city departments in rehabilitation or demolition of problem properties. The second strategy to achieve objective number two is to volunteer down payment grants to qualifying homebuyers. The final proposal is to develop a tracking

system and informational clearinghouse for problem properties. The main strategy planned is to appoint an administrative staff person to track problem and other related factors and to provide information for homeowners and rental owners on various support systems (Logan Park Neighborhood NRP Action Plan Sept. 21, 1998 pp2-4).

#### **IV. Research Assistant's Main Objective**

The objective set before the research assistant complies with the Logan Park Neighborhood NRP Action Plan's housing strategy number three. The third strategy requires the development of a tracking system for problem properties. The main objective is to construct a database for Logan Park on the various problem properties in the neighborhood. This database fulfills the first part of the third housing strategy by supplying a way of tracking problem properties in the neighborhood.

#### **V. Identifying Problem Properties**

To begin identifying problem properties in Logan Park, the housing consultant, the previous housing committee secretary, and the housing research assistant conducted a drive through examination of the neighborhoods housing stock. The members critiqued the street side of each houses exterior. The criteria included structural framework, paint, roof, cement, yard, gutters, siding, and windows. Various factors were checked off if all three members agreed on the condition of the specific element in question. Double check marks were used to indicate extremely poor condition factors. Finally, an overall rating was given to each of the houses critiqued by the three members. The overall rating system designated 1.0 the worse, 1.5 pretty bad, 2.0 bad, and 2.5 needs improvement.

The next step was to take our findings and present them to the housing committee. Then, individuals in the housing committee were responsible for checking the houses in the neighborhood to see if they agreed with the established drive-by rating. There were a couple of houses the committee thought were number ones. Overall the committee agreed with the drive-by rating and reinforced what houses were problem properties. Likewise, homeowners who applied for a Logan Park matching exterior housing grant were asked to list two problem properties. Again, the properties the grantees listed reinforced what the housing committee perceives are problem properties.

## **VI. The Database**

Upon completing the initial inquiry of locating the problem properties in Logan Park, basic information was compiled. To begin, I went to the Hennepin County's property information search website and found the property ID number, owner name, taxpayer name and address, construction year, tax parcel description, taxable market value, total tax, property type, and homestead status (Appendix I). After locating these components, I called Hennepin County's automated property tax information system, which gives information on property tax and prior tax delinquencies on specific property IDs (Appendix I).

Next, I contacted the City of Minneapolis inspections office and acquired a list of Minneapolis boarded buildings list for the Logan Park area and a complete list of intent to condemn buildings in Minneapolis, which cannot be designated by neighborhood (Appendix I). Through this information, Logan Park neighborhood has a considerably



low number of city designated boarded and condemned buildings (Appendix I). In addition to the boarded and condemned buildings, the department of inspections catalogs housing violations by neighborhood. A report of various buildings in Logan Park with the types of violations was acquired by inspections and entered into the database.

In order to locate police calls made to the various problem properties in the neighborhood, I contacted CCP Safe, which informed me that because of their transfer to a new computer system for the new millenium they cannot print out information on specific neighborhoods. CCP Safe directed me to RECAP and to Officer Rumpza. RECAP is unable to classify police calls by neighborhood but can look up police calls by address. I gave the officer the specific addresses the problem properties, and received the reports on the addresses in the neighborhood.

The final element needed to complete the database was to look into utility shut-offs in the neighborhood. I was unable to obtain any concrete information on this matter. I spoke with Frank Duffy in the Minneapolis utilities department at about utility shut-offs. Mr. Duffy volunteered to keep track of specific addresses and to let us know if there are any shut-offs. Another area I was unable to gain information about was rental registration. The rental registration office reported they are unable to locate registration by neighborhood and really do not keep track of rental registration.

## **VII. Results**

As a result of finishing the database, a letter to all the owners or taxpayers was sent to most of the problem properties in the database. The letter informed the owner that their unit was in need of attention and that various agencies such as MCDA, Northeast Housing Resource Center, Logan Park Neighborhood Association, and others can provide assistance. The letter generated a significant response from the owners and taxpayers, and Logan Park's housing consultant is in continual conversation with these people.

## **VIII. Update and Recommendations**

Currently the housing committee is working to implement an overall strategy for problem properties using NPR funds designated for housing. The committee recognizes the need to design a program, which is all-inclusive to include something such as a paint-a-thon to supporting demolition and rebuild projects. Current conversations with property owners and taxpayers of problem properties must continue in order for housing improvements to take place. The Logan Park housing committee is on the appropriate course in designing a comprehensive working plan by collectively considering the various options and discussing them as a group. My recommendations for Logan Park concerning problem properties are limited. I was impressed with the committee's cohesion, and their ability to volunteer many impressive ideas and concepts to the bi-weekly meetings. I encourage the committee to formulate a workable strategy within the next month, and I recommend they seriously consider public housing as a part of their strategy.

I would like to thank the Logan Park housing committee for the opportunity to work with a great group of people. Also a special thank you to Christine Burtness, Logan Park's housing chair and Kim Vohs, the housing consultant for their counsel.

## Appendix I

1. Hennepin County Property information- [www2.co.hennepin.mn.us/pins/main.htm](http://www2.co.hennepin.mn.us/pins/main.htm)
2. Hennepin County automated property tax information- 612/ 348-3011
3. City of Minneapolis inspections- boarded properties & violations- 612/ 673-5858
4. City of Minneapolis inspections- condemned houses- Linda- 612/ 673-5891
5. Safe unit for 2<sup>nd</sup> precinct- Karen Abrahamson- 612/ 673-3084
6. RECAP- Officer Rumpza- 612/ 673-3041
7. Utility shut-off- Frank Duffy- 673-2451
8. Minneapolis rental registration- Dorris Lang- 612/ 673-2324
9. Housing Inspector for Logan Park- Paul Armstrong- cell phone- 685-8447

## Appendix II

### Homestead

Property type  
residential single unit- 20units  
residential 2 unit- 23units  
triplex unit- 1unit  
residential vacant land- 1unit  
total- 45units

### Drive-by Rating

1.0- 8  
1.5- 8  
2.0- 18  
2.5-11  
Average= 1.86

### City Condition Code

4.0- 1  
5.0- 15  
6.0- 19  
7.0- 6  
8.0- 1

### Tax Market Value

Average= \$61673.33

### Tax Delinquency

No- 45  
Prior delinquency- 0

### Work Orders

Yes- 8

### Police Calls

Yes- 9

### Previous Grantee ('94 & '97)

Yes- 5

### '99 Grantee

Yes- 8

### Non-Homestead

Property type  
residential single unit- 9units  
residential 2 unit- 28units  
low income housing- 1unit  
commercial- 1unit  
commercial & apartment- 1unit  
total- 43units

### Drive-by Rating

1.0- 14  
1.5- 13  
2.0- 12  
2.5- 4  
Average= 1.57

### City Condition Code

4.0- 1  
5.0- 13  
6.0- 12  
7.0- 10  
8.0- 1

### Tax Market Value

Average= \$68665.12

### Tax Delinquency

No- 40  
Prior delinquency- 3

### Work Orders

Yes- 12

### Police Calls

25