URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
THE BLIGHT STUDY

Muskogee Urban Renewal Authority

Darrell D. Russell, Chairman (At-Large)
Kelly Beach (Ward IV)
Richard C. Poslick (Ward III)
Robert Goolsby (Ward II)
Robert Warran (Ward I)

Howard W. Brown, Jr. Executive Director
THE BLIGHT STUDY

The Blight Study area consists of 90-acres in the Northwest corridor of the City. Initial impressions of the area tend to show it as overgrown with weeds and grass, peppered with dilapidated structures and dilapidated personal property, with a significant number of undeveloped parcels of raw land.
A declaration of blight by the City Council is the first step in the Urban Renewal Process, and must occur prior to adoption of an Urban Renewal Plan. **Blight does not necessarily mean unattractive.** It contains a much broader definition.
THE BLIGHT STUDY

“Blighted Area” as defined by City Code 80-130 (H) and 11 OKLA. STAT. §38-101(9) (2011):

an area in which there are properties, buildings, or improvements, whether occupied or vacant, whether residential or nonresidential, which by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces; population overcrowding; improper subdivision or obsolete platting of land, inadequate parcel size; arrested economic development; improper street layout in terms of existing or projected traffic needs, traffic congestion or lack of parking or terminal facilities needed for existing or proposed land uses in the area, predominance of defective or inadequate street layouts; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness; insanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements; diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land; defective or unusual conditions of title; any one or combination of such conditions which substantially impair or arrest the sound growth of municipalities, or constitutes an economic or social liability, or which endangers life or property by fire or other causes, or is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, mortality, juvenile delinquency, or crime and by reason thereof, is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.
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This study focuses on only those aspects of “Blight” which are relevant to the study area.

The following items have been found to exist:

a) dilapidated buildings and deterioration of the area / unsafe and unsanitary conditions;

b) inadequate provisions for sanitation;

c) improper subdivision, obsolete platting, inadequate parcel size and obsolescence;

d) defective/improper streets in terms of proposed traffic flow;

e) lack of parking for proposed land uses;

f) arrested economic development;

g) diversity of title;

h) crime.
A. Dilapidated Buildings / Deterioration of the area / Unsafe and Unsanitary Conditions

Current Structures: There are 10 commercial structures, and 47 residential structures in the area, and 1 church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupancy Status</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner – Occupied</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental – Occupied</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition of Structure</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dilapidated</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Inadequate Provisions for sanitation

Sanitary Sewer and Water *(Source: Exhibit 7)*: Currently, not all areas are served by water lines or sanitary sewer lines. Sanitary sewer and water lines would be required to be installed the entire West one-third of the study area containing the Reeves Addition No. 2. In the Factory Addition, sanitary sewer lines would be required to be extended along a) Spruce between Talladega and Martin; b) Reeves between Miller and Talladega; c) N. 5th between Talladega and Miller; d) Shawnee Bypass from Chicago to N. 6th.
THE BLIGHT STUDY

C. Improper subdivision / Obsolete platting of land / inadequate parcel size / Obsolescence

Of the 956 individual parcel lots in the study area, all but 21* have a 25 foot frontage width and a 132 foot depth, with a total area of 3,300 square feet. This renders them unusable for residential single-family, multi-family, mobile home, commercial or light industrial development in their current state. Further, while the majority of the area is currently zoned residential, there are instances of spot zoning as shown by the zoning map of the area incorporated as part of this study.

*These 21 parcels have a varying lot width of 37 feet to 44 and abut the southernmost portion of the area.
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D. Improper street layout / defective streets in terms of proposed traffic flow

All streets within the study area are paved and in good condition. They are type “C” streets with open ditches and are well maintained. Type “C” streets are only appropriate for areas with a 2-acre minimum lot size, or 87,120 square feet and a 200 foot minimum frontage. The current street type do not match the lot sizes. If the study area were to be developed commercially in accordance with the 2013 Future Land Use map, reconstruction of the existing streets to convert them to type “A” with installation of curb and guttering with sidewalks on both sides would be required.
E. Lack of parking for proposed land uses

Unsuitable Commercial Parking. The only parking lots in the area are those adjacent to the few commercial businesses in the area. The remaining portion of the land is undeveloped. If developed commercially in accordance with the 2013 Future Land Use Map, the development would be required to confirm to the Off-Street Parking Requirements in City Code 90-895, et seq., which is paved parking area installed dependent upon the use of a particular business.
F. Arrested economic development

There are many factors within the study area which attribute to the arrested economic development that have been shown to deteriorate since at least 1969, all of which have been detailed within this study. To seed economic development there would be substantial expense to bring the infrastructure up to City Code in accordance with the Plan. The area is not likely to develop independent of involvement of the City and Urban Renewal Authority.

Further, the study area’s residential structures have also not thrived as shown by the number of demolitions which have occurred and those which remain in poor to vacant and dilapidated condition. No new construction or remodel building permits have been issued within the last 5 years, nor does it appear that any could be approved based upon the minimum lot size requirements. Thus, it does not appear the area will develop residentially.
G. Diversity of Title

Ownership *(Source: Exhibit 8)*: There are 956 individual parcels owned by 188 individuals, corporations or trusts. 38 parcels have 3 or more individual owners. These factors combined make it difficult for redevelopment to occur on its own.
MPD Crime Statistics *(Source: Exhibit 9)*: Crime data, available only from July 30, 2011 to February 17, 2013, shows 289 instances of police contact in the study area. Of those, 24 were for suspicious activity, persons or vehicles within the area; 1 was for a sex offense; 7 for domestic disturbance; 2 for fights; and 1 for assault. The majority of the remaining instances for police contact were burglar alarms and traffic violations. The study area is not densely populated, nor well lit, and as such this study predicts that many crimes go unreported to the police simply because they occur under cover of darkness, assisted by the overgrowth of vegetation and unsecured dilapidated structures.
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All of these issues combined make the area unusable in its present state for independent redevelopment absent Urban Renewal Authority and City of Muskogee intervention through the exercise of its powers under home rule, City Code, and Urban Renewal statutes under Oklahoma law.
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URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

For a municipality to use urban renewal, it must establish an Urban Renewal Agency and it must adopt an Urban Renewal Plan.

What Is Urban Renewal?

Urban Renewal is means used to improve specific areas of a city that are poorly developed or underdeveloped. Areas can have old deteriorated buildings, bad streets and utilities or can lack streets and utilities altogether.
Urban renewal also provides the following tools:

- First it allows for the use of tax increment financing to finance improvement projects.
- Second, it allows for special powers to buy and assemble sites for development or redevelopment, if that is desired.
- And third, it allows for special flexibility in working with private parties to complete development projects.
URBAN RENEWAL PLAN


11. "Urban renewal plan" means a plan officially adopted by the municipal governing body, as it exists or is changed from time to time, for an urban renewal project, which plan shall: (a) conform to the general plan for the municipality as a whole except as provided in subsection I of Section 38-106(e) of this title; and (b) be sufficiently complete to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the urban renewal area, zoning and planning changes, if any, land uses, maximum densities, building requirements, and the plan's relationship to definite local objectives respecting appropriate land uses, traffic, public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities, and other public improvements, and plans for financing the project, and plans for the relocation of families and businesses to be displaced.
History:

Former Mayor John Tyler Hammons identified the area in 2011 as having the potential of meeting urban renewal criteria and an immediate economic impact.

Urban Renewal Authority was established On August 22, 2011, with the City Council adoption of Ordinance No. 3882-A.

Commissioners were guided through a months-long blight study to ensure conditions met statutory requirements necessary for urban renewal projects.
The Urban Renewal Plan is required to conform to the general plan (Comprehensive Plan/Land Use Map) adopted by the City of Muskogee.

On May 19, 2014 the Planning Commission approved a resolution finding that the proposed plan conforms with the Comprehensive Plan adopted by the City of Muskogee.
The proposed Urban Renewal Area contains 90 acres in the northwest corridor of the City, located between Shawnee Avenue and Talladega & 11th and Chicago Street.
Property Acquisition / Relocation Assistance

In order to carry out the objectives of this Plan, the Urban Renewal Authority is authorized to acquire land or buildings for public and private development purposes.

THE PROPERTY ACQUISITION PROCESS SHALL FOLLOW THE PROCESS OUTLINE IN OKLAHOMA §11-38-111.

CONDEMNATION POWERS.

AND

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACQUISITION AND RELOCATION SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF MUSKOGEE URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY FOR THE URBAN RENEWAL AREA WILL FOLLOW THE FEDERAL UNIFORM RELOCATION ACT.
URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
PROPERTY ACQUISITION

• WHEN ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY DOES BEGIN:
  – The Urban Renewal Authority will have contracted with a professional Relocation Assistance agency (Agency) to oversee the process.
  – The Agency will obtain an appraisal of the property by a competent real property appraiser who is familiar with local property values.
  – The Agency will contact the legal property owner of record and they must offer you "just compensation" for your property. This amount cannot be less than the appraised fair market value of the property.
URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
PROPERTY ACQUISITION

• WHAT IS FAIR MARKET VALUE?

   Fair market value is sometimes defined as that amount of money which would probably be paid for a property in a sale between a willing seller, who does not have to sell, and a willing buyer, who does not have to buy.
URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

• Certain relocation payments and other assistance must be provided to families, individuals, businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations when they are displaced or their personal property must be moved as a result of a project that is covered by the URA.

• Moving and related expenses: Actual reasonable expenses in moving himself, his family, business, farm operation, or other personal property.

• Comparable replacement dwellings will be made available to displaced persons within a reasonable period of time prior to displacement.
Plan Amendment

It is anticipated that this Renewal Plan will be reviewed periodically during the execution of the Plan. The Plan may be changed, modified, or amended as future conditions warrant. Any plan amendments will be reviewed by the Planning Commission who will make recommendation for amendment to the City Council. All plan amendments will be made as provided in §11 O.S. 38-106.
What will happen next?

- The Authority will seek RFPs for Redevelopment Contracts;
- The Authority will review, have opportunities for public input on selection;
- Funding will be applied for;
- The selected RFP(s) will identify which parcels need to be acquired;
- RFP for Appraisals services will be let;
• Relocation Services will be let;
• Negotiation of parcels necessary to be acquired;
• Any parcels not negotiated will be brought back forth to the Council;
• Redevelopment Contract(s) awarded;
• Bids let on Public Improvements.
## Proposed Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>July – Sept. 2014:</strong></td>
<td>Seek funding opportunities and create a finance plan for infrastructure. Solicit Requests for Proposals for Redevelopment Contract.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sept. - Oct. 2014</strong></td>
<td>Create and implement a plan for acquisition of all necessary parcels within the Urban Renewal Project Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nov. 2014</strong></td>
<td>Rezone property as required pursuant to the Redevelopment Contract. Execute any option contracts for purchase of necessary parcels within the Urban Renewal Area, and transfer to developer as necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dec. - Jan. 2015</strong></td>
<td>Solicit Bids for development of infrastructure, including streets, storm water improvements, waterlines, sanitary sewer.</td>
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