

Housing Needs Assessment

Introduction

In September 1997, the Charter Township of Redford embarked on a Housing Needs Assessment to determine the overall health of the Township's housing stock. This analysis consisted of a structural quality survey, which was analyzed to determine the extent, character, and patterns of deterioration. The analysis helped the Township to identify target treatment areas and develop methods of rehabilitation. One of the recommendations from the 1998 report was to conduct another structural quality survey after a three-year period but only for those areas identified as being in a state of decline. Therefore, a second study was conducted and completed in 2001.

A Housing Needs Assessment was conducted as part of this Master Plan update to ensure that continued attention is paid to the structural quality of Redford Township single-family homes. This assessment is based on a structural quality survey conducted in May of 2006. This was a complete assessment of Redford Township's entire single-family detached inventory similar to the survey conducted in 1997.

The Charter Township of Redford is located in the northcentral part of Wayne County and has historically been viewed as a bedroom community. A bedroom community is defined as satellite community that serves primarily as a place to house the work force of a neighboring central city¹. Redford meets the definition of a bedroom community for several reasons. First and foremost, the Township is predominately residential with the majority of the housing stock being affordable single-family homes. The proximity of the Township to the City of Detroit and its central location to the entire southeast Michigan region also helps to classify Redford as a bedroom community. Finally, its highway accessibility offers ease of movement to commuters to reach outside employment destinations.

However, as is the case with many suburban communities located near the central Detroit area, the housing stock has reached an age of vulnerability to decline inasmuch as the majority of the community's housing stock was built prior to 1960. There are many reasons for the deterioration of a home or neighborhood. Proximity of incompatible land uses, inadequate building and housing code enforcement, and poor environmental conditions of the neighborhood causing blight are all factors in the decline of housing structures. However, the major

Footnotes:

1 Eisner, Simon; Eisner, Stanley; and Gallion Arthur, *The Urban Pattern, Sixth Edition*, New York, 1993.

contributor to housing deterioration is inadequate original construction and lack of building maintenance.

Just as housing deterioration can be attributed to a combination of factors, so to is the myriad of reasons for lack of proper housing maintenance. Often, older areas of a community are inhabited by the elderly population and first-time homebuyers who have limited income to make repairs. Also, there may be a lack of incentive on the homeowner's part due to concerns about neighborhood blight and the stability of property values. Finally, poor original construction may increase the cost of repairs to the homeowner.

Redford Township has been increasingly proactive in its approach to preserving the structural quality of its housing stock. The first Housing Needs Assessment report completed in 1998 was a major step in identifying areas within the Township that needed special attention. By conducting the survey again three years later in the identified target areas, the Township again assessed their accomplishments and determined further courses of action. Finally, by conducting a housing assessment approximately ten years from the original study, the Township can better evaluate long term effects of programs put into motion after the first survey. The remainder of this report describes the housing characteristics of Redford Township as well as the methodology and results of the updated housing structural quality survey.

Methodology

A housing needs assessment is conducted in three phases. The first phase consists of an actual structural quality survey of the housing units. The second phase is to examine the data collected during the survey and analyze the extent, type, and patterns of deterioration to pinpoint target areas. Finally, treatment strategies are devised.

The structural quality survey was conducted in May of 2006 and included Redford Township in its entirety. The survey was performed using a "windshield survey" technique, which involves driving each street in the Township to evaluate every single-family home.

The actual structural quality assessment was conducted by examining each individual home against a specific set of predetermined criteria. To facilitate the on-site evaluation of each structure a summary checklist was compiled that outlined the criteria to be used. In order to remain consistent with the 1998 and 2001 reports, the same summary checklist was used in the 2006 survey. A copy of the checklist is included in this section.

The function of the criteria resulted in a “score” for each unit. The “score” placed the structure into one of three categories:

1. Standard – includes homes of all ages, including those currently under construction, which are generally in good repair but may need some minor maintenance.
2. Deteriorating – includes homes that are in poor condition as evidenced by either a defect in a single major structural element (roof sags, walls out of plumb or cracked foundations) or by five or more minor structural flaws like rotted window frames, sagging porches, old or missing shingles, open cracks or holes. The nature of these deficiencies is such that although undesirable, the repair and rehabilitation of the home appears to be economically feasible.
3. Substandard – includes homes that have become so dilapidated that they are unsafe for habitation. They contain at least two major structural defects combined with other minor structural flaws. Rehabilitation is often not economically feasible because of their advanced stage of deterioration.

To help illustrate the differing structural quality categories, sample photographs of each condition are provided in this section. The photographs are utilized as examples only, and do not necessarily reflect the type or actual housing stock found in Redford Township. A description of the conditions observed in each unit is provided to help articulate the defects found.

Survey Results

The next step in housing needs assessment consists of analyzing the data gathered during the structural quality survey to determine the extent, character, and patterns of deterioration. To provide a more area specific analysis, the Township was broken up into six analysis zones. **Map 5** depicts the Structural Quality Survey Analysis Zones.

Patterns of Deterioration

There were 19,226 total detached, single family homes evaluated as part of the structural quality windshield survey. The 2000 census indicates that there are 19,207 single-family units found in the Township. The difference in total homes evaluated and the 2000 census total is due to demolitions and new homes built between 2000 and 2006. Of

Structural Quality Survey Checklist

Major Structural Defects

Roof

Sagging/missing materials/holes over larger area (>25%) of roof _____

Walls

Bowed walls/holes or missing material over large area (>25%) _____

Foundation

Lack of proper foundation/ foundation walls out of plumb/ holes or missing materials over large area (>25%) _____

Minor Structural Defects

Roof

Less critical sagging/missing materials over small area (<25%) _____

Walls

Holes/open cracks/missing materials over small area (<25%) chipping paint _____

Foundation

Holes/open cracks, rotted or missing materials over small area (<25%) _____

Windows/Doors

Loose, rotted, frames and sills out of plumb/missing, broken panes. Lacking storms and screens _____

Porches/Steps/Eavestroughs and Downspouts

Rotted, worn, missing material, sagging or out of plumb, or pulling away from building _____

Chimney/Flue

Out of plumb, sagging, visible cracks, or loose missing masonry units _____

Porch Light

Missing/broken fixture _____

Total Major Defects _____

Total Minor Defects _____

Assessment

___ Sound: 0 major structural defects: less than 5 minor structural defects

___ Deteriorating: 1 major or 5 or more minor structural defects

___ Substandard: 2 or more major or 1 major + 5 or more minor structural defects

Standard Structural Condition



Standard one-story brick ranch in good structural condition.



Standard ranch with the addition of a second story post-construction add-on. Could experience minor to major roof sag due to the addition, but not seen here.

These photographs are utilized as examples only, and do not necessarily reflect the type or actual housing stock found in Redford Township.

Deteriorating Structural Condition



This home has one major structural defect with a wall that contains more than 25 percent missing materials. It also has three minor defects which are missing materials on the roof, loose and rotted window sills and a sagging and out of plumb porch/steps.



This structure also has missing materials over more than 25 percent of its walls. Its three minor defects include a sagging roof, rotted fascia boards, missing gutters and the porch, columns and steps are out of plumb.

These photographs are utilized as examples only, and do not necessarily reflect the type or actual housing stock found in Redford Township.

Substandard Structural Condition



This structure has several major and minor defects which include a sagging roof that is missing materials, lack of a proper foundation, missing material over the walls and a missing/rotted fascia.



The above structure has severe fire damage that resulted in major and minor defects. The house is exposed to the elements and is unlivable.

These photographs are utilized as examples only, and do not necessarily reflect the type or actual housing stock found in Redford Township.

the residential structures surveyed, only 302 units or 1.6 percent were determined to be in deteriorating condition. Only six, single-family homes were found to be in substandard condition (0.03 percent).

Data in **Table 22** outline the results of the windshield survey by analysis zone. Analysis Zone 1 had the largest number of homes surveyed as well as the largest number of deteriorating homes at 122 units. Analysis Zone 1 also has the highest percentage of deteriorating homes at 2.8 percent. Significantly, Analysis Zone 1 contains 40.4 percent of the 302 total deteriorating structures in the Township.

Table 22: Structural Quality Survey Results: 2006

Area	Total Houses Surveyed	Standard		Deteriorating		Sub-Standard	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Analysis Zone 1	4,384	4,259	97.1%	122	2.8%	3	0.07%
Analysis Zone 2	2,200	2,159	98.1%	40	1.8%	1	0.05%
Analysis Zone 3	3,805	3,744	98.4%	59	1.6%	2	0.05%
Analysis Zone 4	3,255	3,191	98.0%	64	2.0%	0	0.0%
Analysis Zone 5	2,330	2,323	99.7%	7	0.3%	0	0.0%
Analysis Zone 6	3,252	3,242	99.7%	10	0.3%	0	0.0%
TOTALS	19,226	18,918	98.4%	302	1.6%	6	0.03%

Source: Wade Trim May 2006 field survey.

The second highest percentage of deteriorating structures was found in Analysis Zone 4 with 2.0 percent, followed by Zone 2 and Zone 3 with 1.8 percent and 1.6 percent, respectively. Analysis Zones 5 and 6 each contained only 0.3 percent deteriorating structures.

Information presented on **Map 6** shows the geographic distribution of housing structural quality in Redford Township. Specifically, the map displays the percentage of housing units for each block that are deteriorating or substandard. Each block is classified into a range by percentage of deteriorating or substandard units as follows: less than 5 percent; greater than or equal to 5 but less than 15 percent; greater than or equal to 15 but less than 25 percent; greater than or equal to 25 but less than 50 percent; and greater than or equal to 50 percent. By far, the majority of blocks in Redford Township contain less than 5 percent deteriorating or substandard structures. Only one block featured more than 50 percent deteriorating or substandard structures, while four blocks featured between 25 and 50 percent deteriorating structures. It is important to note that the percentages for certain blocks may be misleading due to a relatively low number of total structures. For example, the only block identified as having more than 50 percent deteriorating

or substandard structures has only one single-family structure, identified as deteriorating.

Types of Structural Decline

As was discussed in the methodology section of this study, three categories of major structural elements were evaluated: roofs, walls, and foundations. The minor elements examined included the roof, walls, and foundations, as well as windows/doors, porches/steps/eavestroughs/downspouts, chimney/flue, and porch lights.

Major Structural Defects

Of the homes found to be deteriorating or substandard, many were identified based on having a major structural defect. Of these defects, the most common problem found was the condition of the roofs. In order for a roof to qualify as having a major defect, it must be sagging, feature missing materials (shingles), or contain holes that encompass more than 25 percent of the entire roof area. The standard useful age of a roof is typically 30 years and, after this time, roof problems can begin to occur. As was noted in the Socio Economic Profile section of the Master Plan (Table 10), Redford Township features a significant number of older homes, indicating that many homes have exceeded this 30-year time period.

The next major element examined were the walls of the single-family homes. While not as common as roof problems, several homes were identified as having a major structural defect in the walls. In order for a wall to qualify as having a major defect, it must have holes, open cracks, or missing materials over more than 25 percent of the entire wall area, or show deflection.

The final major structural element problem found during the survey was with the foundation of the structure. In general, foundation problems were the least frequently identified major structural defect in Redford Township. While this was not a leading problem, it does warrant investigation. Storm water runoff seems to be the cause for foundation problems of cracks, buckling, or bowing of foundation walls. This was evidenced more by the condition of the adjacent driveways, which were also cracked and buckling.

Minor Structural Defects

Some of the homes in the structural quality windshield survey were

qualified as deteriorating because of the presence of more than five minor structural defects. The most common minor defects observed were roof problems, window and door defects, porches, eaves and downspout neglect. Specifically, it was observed that replacement roofing materials were needed, porch roofs were sagging or columns were out of plumb, eaves and downspouts were either pulling away from the structure, rotted or were missing, and finally, windows and doors were rotted or had broken frames.

Housing Quality Trends Since 1998

It is clear that Redford Township has made great strides in addressing improvements to deteriorating structures.

Table 23: Survey Comparison

Year	Total Homes Surveyed	Standard		Deteriorating		Substandard	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
1998 Survey	19,022	18,319	96.3%	703	3.7%	0	0.00%
2006 Survey	19,226	18,918	98.4%	302	1.6%	6	0.03%

Source: Housing Needs Assessment Report for 1998 and Wade Trim May 2006 Field Survey.

As can be seen from data in **Table 23**, which makes a comparison between the housing studies, the number of deteriorating

structures found in the Township has significantly declined. During the 1998 study, 703 structures, or 3.7 percent of all structures, were considered deteriorating. In comparison, the 2006 survey revealed that there are currently only 302 deteriorated structures in the Township, a reduction of 401 structures. This significant reduction is a testament to the concerted rehabilitation effort on the part of the Township. In terms of substandard units, the total number increased from 0 to 6 structures between 1998 and 2006, but the total number of substandard structures represents a minute percentage of the Township at 0.03 percent.

Data presented on **Map 7** show the trends in housing quality in Redford Township geographically. This is done by a side-by-side comparison of the 1998 housing survey results map with the 2006 housing survey results map. Using three categories for percentage of deteriorating or substandard units by block, the map clearly shows the progress made between 1998 and 2006. In 1998, a much higher number of blocks had deteriorating or substandard percentages above 25 percent. As of 2006, only five blocks had percentages above 25 percent. In fact, because the use of three percentage categories provided limited results, the less than 25 percent category was further separated into three categories for 2006 to display the survey results and provide a more meaningful analysis (see Maps 6 and 8).

Treatment Strategies and Enhanced Code Enforcement Areas

The third and final phase of the housing needs assessment involves developing strategies to address housing deterioration and identifying enhanced code enforcement areas in the Township.

Treatment Strategies

For both the 1998 and 2001 Housing Needs Assessment Reports, three strategies were presented: preservation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment. From the rate of improvement the Township has seen in reducing the number of units in a deteriorated state, it becomes clear that these methods have been successful. Because of this, the same strategies should continue to be employed. Data on **Map 8** illustrate the recommended treatment strategies for Redford Township. A description of each strategy is presented below.

Preservation Strategy

The preservation strategy involves the continued maintenance and protection of the existing housing stock. It is intended to be a long-term approach to combat structural decline. It involves the property owner, Township resources, and private lending institutions working together to ensure the structural health of the Township housing stock. Through a sensitive code enforcement program and the continuation of the housing assistance programs offered by the Township, a successful preservation strategy can be implemented.

A sensitive code enforcement program in identified preservation areas is a significant support service that a local community can implement. The program is utilized to encourage lenders to extend credit in neighborhoods characterized by an aging housing stock. Through sensitive code enforcement, minor structural defects can be addressed to help slow or stop the deterioration of the homes. This encourages lenders to grant loans in these neighborhoods because the fear of decline adversely affecting the marketability of the home is counteracted.

In conjunction with the sensitive code enforcement program, the Township needs to continue its efforts in supporting the single-family homeowner in their maintenance efforts. Code enforcement efforts without the benefit of support services for those in need could cause housing abandonment instead of rehabilitation. Therefore, the commitment of

the Township in continuing their rehabilitation loan program to finance required improvements is critical to the success of the preservation strategy.

The vast majority of single-family structures surveyed in the Township were found to be in sound condition and a candidate for simple preservation efforts by the Township. As graphically presented on **Map 8**, blocks identified for the preservation strategy include all those containing less than 25 percent deteriorating or substandard structures. However, the map further breaks up those preservation blocks into three types: less than 5 percent (Type 1); greater than or equal to 5 but less than 15 percent (Type 2); and greater than or equal to 15 but less than 25 percent (Type 3). The Township should consider focusing standard preservation efforts in those blocks with slightly higher percentages of deteriorating or substandard structures such as Type 2 and Type 3 blocks.

Rehabilitation Strategy

Based on the results of the 2006 housing survey, only four blocks are categorized as in need of rehabilitation. A rehabilitation block is one that contains greater than or equal to 25 percent, but less than 50 percent deteriorating or substandard structures.

The rehabilitation strategy will need to address the repair of existing structural defects, correcting environmental deficiencies, and upgrading public services and facilities to eliminate existing blighting conditions. This will require a more prominent presence of the Township Code Enforcement Officers. Frequent field visits to determine violations coupled with close follow-up appointments to ensure compliance are essential to the improvement of these declining areas.

It will also be important for Redford Township to work closely with the single-family homeowners in these areas to procure their cooperation. Information and counseling services that explain the methods and procedures of making home repairs will be a requirement of this treatment strategy. The Township's housing rehabilitation program should be consistently marketed to the homeowners in these areas.

To a lesser extent, and where feasible based on Township staff availability or specific opportunities arising, the rehabilitation strategy should be extended to blocks outside of the identified rehabilitation areas that contain higher percentages of deteriorating housing.

Redevelopment Strategy

In the 1998 and 2001 reports, the redevelopment blocks were identified as a block that contained greater than or equal to 50 percent deteriorating or substandard structures. In 2006, only one such block was identified. As mentioned earlier, this block only contains one total structure that was surveyed as deteriorating, meaning that intensive redevelopment measures are not necessarily appropriate for this block.

Because only one block in the Township is identified as a redevelopment block, the redevelopment strategy would be better employed on a property specific case throughout the Township, where necessary. In 2006, a total of six homes were identified as substandard, and may be candidates for the redevelopment strategy.

The redevelopment strategy predominantly involves clearance of existing, built-up residential and/or nonresidential structures, thereby eliminating substandard and blighting influences. Consequently, the area can then be redeveloped to improve structural and environmental conditions.

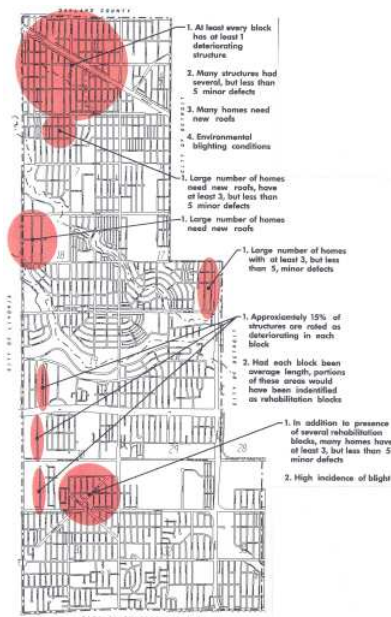
Enhanced Code Enforcement Areas

There are several characteristics used to determine whether an area is a candidate for enhanced code enforcement. The primary characteristic is the presence of multiple blocks, in close proximity, with greater than or equal to 5 percent deteriorating or substandard structures. Enhanced code enforcement areas typically also feature several blocks with deteriorating or substandard structure percentages in excess of 15 percent. Other characteristics of enhanced code enforcement areas include frequent occurrences of blight and a concentration of homes with several, but less than 5 minor defects.

In the 1998 housing study, enhanced code enforcement areas were also recommended. The enhanced code enforcement area map from 1998 is provided in this section (enhanced code enforcement areas are shown in red).

Graphically illustrated on **Map 8** are the proposed enhanced code enforcement areas for Redford Township for 2006. As can be seen, three enhanced code enforcement areas are proposed. The first area is located near 7 Mile Road and Beech Daly, the second is located north-east of 5 Mile Road and Beech Daly, and the third is located northwest of Plymouth Road and Beech Daly.

1998 Enhanced Code Enforcement Areas



Enhanced code enforcement activities are anticipated to be more aggressive than preservation efforts and less involved than rehabilitation efforts. Activities envisioned for the enhanced code enforcement areas will involve more frequent field visits from code enforcement officers and more frequent follow-up on required compliance actions. It is also recommended that programs such as the Township's housing rehabilitation program be aggressively marketed to homeowners within the enhanced code enforcement areas.

Current Housing Rehab Target Areas

At present, the Redford Township Housing and Community Development Department focuses its housing rehabilitation efforts into five defined "target areas." The limits of these target areas are as follows:

- Area 1: Inkster Road to Five Points Street and from Eight Mile Road to Seven Mile Road.
- Area 2: Inkster Road to Five Points Street and from Seven Mile Road to Curtis Street.
- Area 3: Beech Daly Road to Telegraph Road and from Five Mile Road to Puritan Street.
- Area 4: Inkster Road to San Jose Street and from Schoolcraft Road to Lyndon Street.
- Area 5: Beech Daly Road to Hemingway Street and from Plymouth Road to Capitol Street.

As part of this Housing Needs Assessment, it is appropriate to determine whether the Township's current rehabilitation target areas are consistent with the findings of the 2006 housing survey, and in particular, the enhanced code enforcement areas proposed on **Map 8**. In general, it is clear that the Township's current target areas are in line with the findings of the 2006 housing survey. The solid majority of blocks in Redford Township with more than 5 percent deteriorating or substandard structures are located within one of the above target areas. Additionally, the enhanced code enforcement areas as recommended in this study are almost fully encompassed by the Township's current target areas. Only a small portion of one enhanced code enforcement area extends beyond the limits of a current target area. This small area is found on the south side of 5 Mile Road between Beech Daly Road and Garfield Street.

Because of this, we recommend that the Township consider extending Target Area 3 to cover this small area.

Conclusion

Redford Township has made great strides in the preservation of housing stock through its code enforcement and housing rehabilitation efforts. This can be clearly seen in the reduction of deteriorated structures and the amount of construction investment funneled through the Township since 1998. Currently, only about 1.6 percent of the Township's housing stock was determined to be in a state of deterioration. Overall, the vast majority of Redford Township's housing stock can be described as being in sound structural condition.

As a result of this study, the following strategies are recommended:

1. First and foremost, the Township should maintain its efforts with the Housing Rehabilitation Program. This program should continue to be aggressively marketed to the homeowners within the Township's identified target areas, but may also be extended to other areas of the Township where appropriate.
2. Sensitive code enforcement coupled with housing rehabilitation assistance should continue in the standard preservation areas of the Township. Positive relationships with local financial institutions that understand the rehabilitation goals of the Township will support the preservation efforts in these areas as well.
3. We further recommend that more intensive strategies of rehabilitation and/or redevelopment are necessary for areas identified as: enhanced code enforcement areas; rehabilitation or redevelopment blocks; or on a property specific basis, where warranted. More intensive strategies may include frequent visits by code enforcement officers to ensure compliance, property acquisition, and support from the Township through their rehabilitation loan program efforts.
4. We would also recommend that the Township continue to monitor the areas of deterioration and blocks with higher percentages of deteriorating homes closely to ensure the reversal of neighborhood decline. The Community Development Department should continue to maintain statistics regarding rehabilitation efforts in the Township.