

# 2013

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New York Governor's Office of Public Safety

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# CORE

**COMMUNITY CONDITIONS FIELD STUDY**

City of Newburgh, NY

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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#### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF GREATER NEWBURGH

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Founded in 1999, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh is a local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International with the mission to provide safe, decent, and affordable housing in partnership with low-income families. As of March 2013, Habitat Newburgh has completed 62 homes for 62 first time homebuyers in Newburgh. The affiliate is on track to complete 100 homes by the end of 2016. Habitat Newburgh homebuyers currently contribute over \$300,000 annually in city and school taxes, the affiliate's building has also added over \$7 million to the assessed property values in the City of Newburgh.

#### CENTER FOR AGING & POLICY AT MOUNT SAINT MARY COLLEGE

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**Lawrence T. Force PhD**, *Director*

**Jeffrey S. Kahana PhD**, *Director*

Mount Saint Mary College is a private academic institution with about 2,700 students. The college has 47 undergraduate programs and master's degrees in education, business, and nursing. This college also has about 1,800 traditional undergraduate students living on campus within the city.

The Center on Aging and Policy located at Mount Saint Mary College promotes an interdisciplinary perspective dedicated to excellence in research and scholarship in the field of lifespan development and aging.

#### NHS HUMAN SERVICES; CENTER FOR HOPE

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**Isabel Rojas**, *Director*

The Center for Hope in Newburgh operates under the wing of NHS Human Services of Orange County, an affiliate of the national NHS Human Services non-profit organization. The Center and its programs are geared towards engaging youth with afterschool opportunities and job and internship opportunities during the summer months.

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## OVERVIEW

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### THE COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY & RE-INVESTMENT (CORE) INITIATIVE

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New York State's Community, Opportunity and Reinvestment (CORe) Initiative is designed to help the State and local partners to better-address challenges of economic and social distress that have persisted in certain neighborhoods, despite considerable investments. CORe focuses on integration across a wide variety of interrelated policy areas, from public safety to social and economic development, and coordinated partnerships among layers of government, nonprofit agencies, and the private sector.

The emphasis is on data-driven, evidence-based approaches that begin with key information on conditions in participating communities. Among the resources that CORe will offer are new tools for capturing timely data on conditions at the neighborhood level and for linking and analyzing these data in connection with information on the incidence of crime in targeted communities. This paper reports early findings from a field test of these developing tools, conducted for the Governor's Office of Public Safety by a team of community and research partners in the City of Newburgh.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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The Governor's Office of Public Safety convened Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh, the Center for Aging and Policy at Mount Saint Mary College, and the Center for Hope and contracted these parties to oversee the process of planning, data collection and analysis in the City of Newburgh.

During the planning phase, a study area/neighborhood was selected, the data collection tool was customized for field test in Newburgh, and surveyors were trained on using the tool and collecting data. After two and half months of convening partners and planning, surveyors began data collection in the selected neighborhood and completed it after three months. The final phase of the project consisted of supplementing and analyzing the community conditions data. The project also includes the referral of problems to identified point persons in City agencies and following up on responses.

### REPORT STRUCTURE

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The report looks first at the City of Newburgh as whole including an overview and brief history, crime statistics, population demographics, and socio-economic indicators. The report then looks at Census Tract 4 through a similar lens. An in-depth look at the study area follows with analysis at the Census Block Group and Census Block level. The report concludes with recommendations.

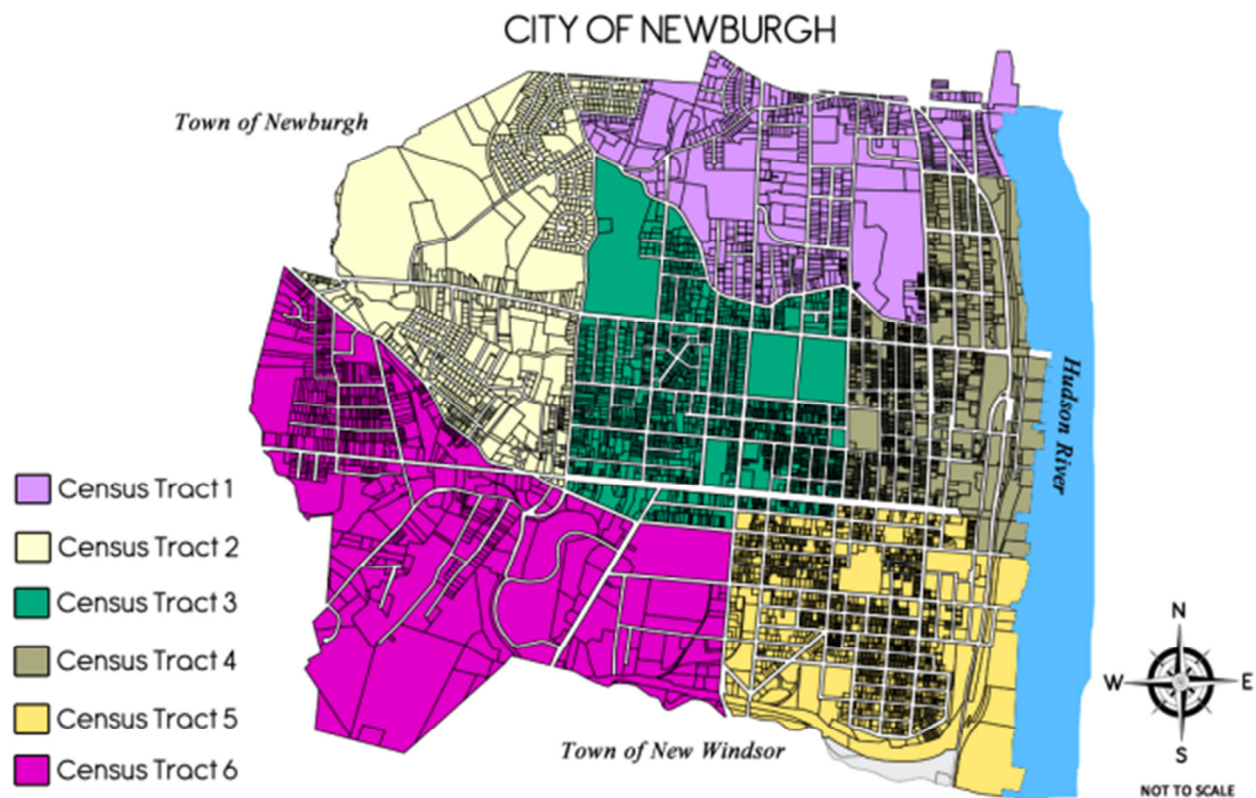
# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. CITY OF NEWBURGH

The City of Newburgh is an economically and socially depressed community, declared the 9th most distressed urban center in the country based on 2010 census information. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) identified Newburgh as one of 15 cities in "double trouble" because its poverty and unemployment rates far exceed the national average. HUD has also placed the City of Newburgh on the list of hardest places for development in the country. The recent economic downturn has only exacerbated these issues.

The City of Newburgh, New York, is a 3.2 square mile urban area on the eastern edge of Orange County, 60 miles north of New York City. It is surrounded on three sides by the suburban towns of Newburgh and New Windsor and borders the western shore of the Hudson River. The City is divided into six Census Tracts as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1. CITY OF NEWBURGH & CENSUS TRACTS



### CORE INITIATIVE ASSESSMENT REPORT: NEWBURGH, NY



Data Source: Orange County Division of GIS;  
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh



Produced by: Habitat for Humanity  
of Greater Newburgh

Date: March 2013



The eastern and southeastern portions of the city comprise the largest contiguous historic district in New York State. Referred to as the East End, it is an area that contains 2,217 buildings. Many of these buildings were constructed during the city's industrial heyday at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is a mixture of every type of architectural style including Colonial, Federal, Neo-Classical and Queen Anne. There are also several multi-unit buildings that were built to accommodate the large number of working class citizens needed to run the many factories and mills in the city. Today, many of these units have either been abandoned or are in dire need of improvement. There has also been a concentration of development of these units into substandard rental property.

This area accounts for nearly a third of the city and is comprised almost entirely by Census Tracts 4 and 5. Almost all of Newburgh's historic landmarks, buildings and homes are located in this area. Most notable is the national landmark of Washington's Headquarters, the first publically owned historic site. Additionally, this area contains several other historic sites such as the Dutch Reformed Church designed by A.J. Davis, the David Crawford House, the 1846 Niven Court House and Downing Park designed by Central Park designers Calvert and Vaux as well as many historic churches including Calvary Presbyterian Church, the first public building personally wired by Thomas Edison.

Within the historic district of Newburgh, Washington's Headquarters is the most active tourist site and has helped spur a number of new businesses on Liberty Street including bars, cafes, antique and artist shops.

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## HISTORY

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In the 1950s, *Look Magazine* declared the City of Newburgh as one of the best cities in the United States to live. Its proximity to the financial capital of the country in New York City combined with access to virtually the entire country via the river and railways were factors that contributed to this designation. Once a vibrant and lively city, Newburgh's downtown was busy with people shopping, going out to eat, and enjoying entertainment at the historic Ritz Theater.

In the last 60 years, department stores in downtown Newburgh have closed in favor of malls outside the city, industry has left for cheaper labor costs and lower taxes, the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge opened allowing travelers on Route 84 to by-pass Newburgh and the waterfront, and the Stewart Air Force Base downgraded to a base for the Air National Guard (City of Newburgh, 2012). Economic activity has moved from Newburgh to surrounding towns and suburbs which have heavily impacted City revenue and local employment. Census Tracts 4 and 5 which were hubs of industry and economic activity have been the most affected by this shift. The once thriving City of Newburgh in the last 60 years has lost its industry, and crime and other social ills have risen.

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## CRIME

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In recent years, Newburgh has received national media attention for its level of violent crime and other factors often associated with low income neighborhoods. Recent statistics point to Newburgh as more violent than New York City. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report of 2011, the City of Newburgh had a per capita crime rate of 6.10—nearly three times that of New York City. As shown in Table 1, Newburgh's crime per capita rate is nearly identical to Rochester's, a city with 182,515 more people than Newburgh, and significantly higher than the crime rate of New York State. Even compared to the City of Poughkeepsie, which is just 20 miles north of Newburgh on the other side of the Hudson River

with a similar population size, violent crime per capita and overall crime per capita in Newburgh is much higher.

TABLE 1. NEWBURGH CRIME RATE VS OTHER NY CITIES [2011]<sup>1</sup>

City	Population	Violent crimes	Violent Crime Per Capita	Property crimes	Total Crime Per Capita
Kingston	24,000	93	0.39	580	2.80
Middletown	28,212	163	0.58	947	3.93
<b>Newburgh</b>	<b>28,996</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>1.82</b>	<b>1,243</b>	<b>6.10</b>
New Windsor Town	25,357	26	0.10	498	2.07
Poughkeepsie	32,883	326	0.99	1,029	4.12
Albany	98,296	939	0.96	4,611	5.65
New York	8,211,875	51,209	0.62	140,457	2.33
Syracuse	145,822	1,302	0.89	5,275	4.51
Rochester	211,511	2,029	0.96	10,934	6.13
<b>New York State</b>			0.51		2.56

These unusually high per capita crime rates for a city the size of Newburgh, combined with inadequate police resources to handle the crime creates an environment in which Newburgh residents fear walking the streets after sunset. This issue is further explored in the Neighborhood Analysis Section of this report.

## POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Census data from 1990, 2000, 2010, indicated the population of the City of Newburgh grew by 6.9% during the 1990's, and 2.4% between 2000 and 2010. As the cost of living in New York continues to rise, upstate New York cities and towns have become a favorite destination of those seeking cheaper real estate while still close enough to access New York City. While population growth in Newburgh decreased, Poughkeepsie saw a 9.59% increase in its population and a number of other Hudson Valley towns saw double digit growth—Beacon(12.55%), New Paltz (12.99%) and Rhinecliff(14.56 %).<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 2. CITY OF NEWBURGH POPULATION BY RACE (CENSUS 2010)

Population	1990 Census	2000 Census	% Change	2010 Census	% Change
White (non-Hispanic)	11,154	7,969	(28.6%)	5,931	(36%)
African-American/Black (non-Hispanic)	9,031	8,961	(0.8%)	8083	(11%)
Hispanic (all races)	6,025	10,257	70.2%	13,819	26%
Total Population	26,445	28,259	6.9%	28,935	2.4%

<sup>1</sup> (U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> (World Media Group LLC, 2012)

The racial distribution of the population also experienced changes. Over the last 20 years, the White and the African American population declined while the Hispanic population has increased rapidly.

TABLE 3. CITY OF NEWBURGH ETHNICITY BY CENSUS TRACT (CENSUS 2010)

Census Tract	Total Pop.	White (Non-Hispanic)	% of Total Pop.	Black/African American (Non-Hispanic)	% of Total Pop.	Total Hispanic Pop.	% of Total Pop.
1	3,525	1,651	47%	897	25%	847	24%
2	2,566	934	36%	449	17%	1,075	42%
3	6,770	1,094	16%	1,277	19%	4,096	61%
<b>4</b>	<b>4,957</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>2,626</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>1,426</b>	<b>29%</b>
5	7,781	784	10%	1,956	25%	4,881	63%
6	3,336	814	24%	878	26%	1,494	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,935</b>	<b>5,931</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>8,083</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>13,819</b>	<b>48%</b>

This ethnic diversity is unusual considering not only the geographic size of the city but the size of the population as well. This diversity introduces to the city of Newburgh a mix of cultures and ideas that at times complicates interactions in the City. This comes very much into play when discussing various neighborhood gangs, many of which are formed along ethnic lines.

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### SOCIO-ECONOMIC

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Socio-economically, the City of Newburgh faces several challenges. Newburgh has a large population of youth and young adults. According to the 2010 Census, Newburgh has 145.9 per 1,000 adolescents, compared to 44.1 per 1,000 adolescents at the state level and 48.7 per 1,000 adolescents at the national level. Those figures, combined with unemployment for 16-24 year olds at 11.9%, and only a 63% graduation rate leads to a large population of youth and young adults with little to do, and no way of breaking the cycle of poverty, 30.9% of the population of the City of Newburgh lives below the poverty rate.

An analysis of income and poverty statistics conditions suggests disparities between the city and county. The median household income in Orange County was 60 percent higher than in the City of Newburgh in 2000; this disparity grew even further to 87 percent in 2010. In 2000, the per-capita income for residents of Orange County was 62 percent more than in the City of Newburgh. By 2010, the disparity between the County and the City in income per capita had grown to 81 percent.<sup>3</sup> As income disparity has increased, a large number of families in Newburgh now live below the poverty line see Table 4.

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<sup>3</sup> (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)

TABLE 4. PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES WHOSE INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS IS BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL (CENSUS 2010)

	City of Newburgh	Orange County
<b>All families</b>	24.20%	7.90%
With related children under 18 years	32.10%	12.60%
With related children under 5 years only	38.70%	16.20%
<b>Married couple families</b>	13.20%	5.20%
With related children under 18 years	19.20%	8.40%
With related children under 5 years only	14.90%	10.80%
<b>Families with female householder, no husband present</b>	39.80%	19.20%
With related children under 18 years	47.10%	26.30%
With related children under 5 years only	72.90%	35.80%

Within the Newburgh itself, income disparity and number of families living below the poverty level are not evenly distributed geographically. As shown in Table 6, there is noticeable difference between the City of Newburgh Census Tract 4 income levels.

According to the latest statistics last released by the Census Bureau in 2011, as of 2007 the City of Newburgh had 910 business establishments with over \$2.55 billion in revenue, \$382 million in annual payroll, and hired 11,320 employees.<sup>4</sup>

The above mentioned social and economic characteristics present the City of Newburgh with very real urban problems. As we will show in discussion of the selected neighborhood within Census Tract 4, these urban problems magnify at the census tract level and even more so at the most basic unit of the city of Newburgh—the census block level.

## B. CENSUS TRACT 4

By population, Census Tract 4 is the third largest census tract in the City of Newburgh. As shown in Figure 2, It is divided into 5 Census Block Groups, and the study area of this field test lies in Block Groups 003, 004, and 005. In contrast to the population size, Census Tract 4 is the smallest geographically and has limited residential real estate, see Figure 2. As a result, the residents of this census tract are funneled into densely populated areas, such as the area within the study area of this project.

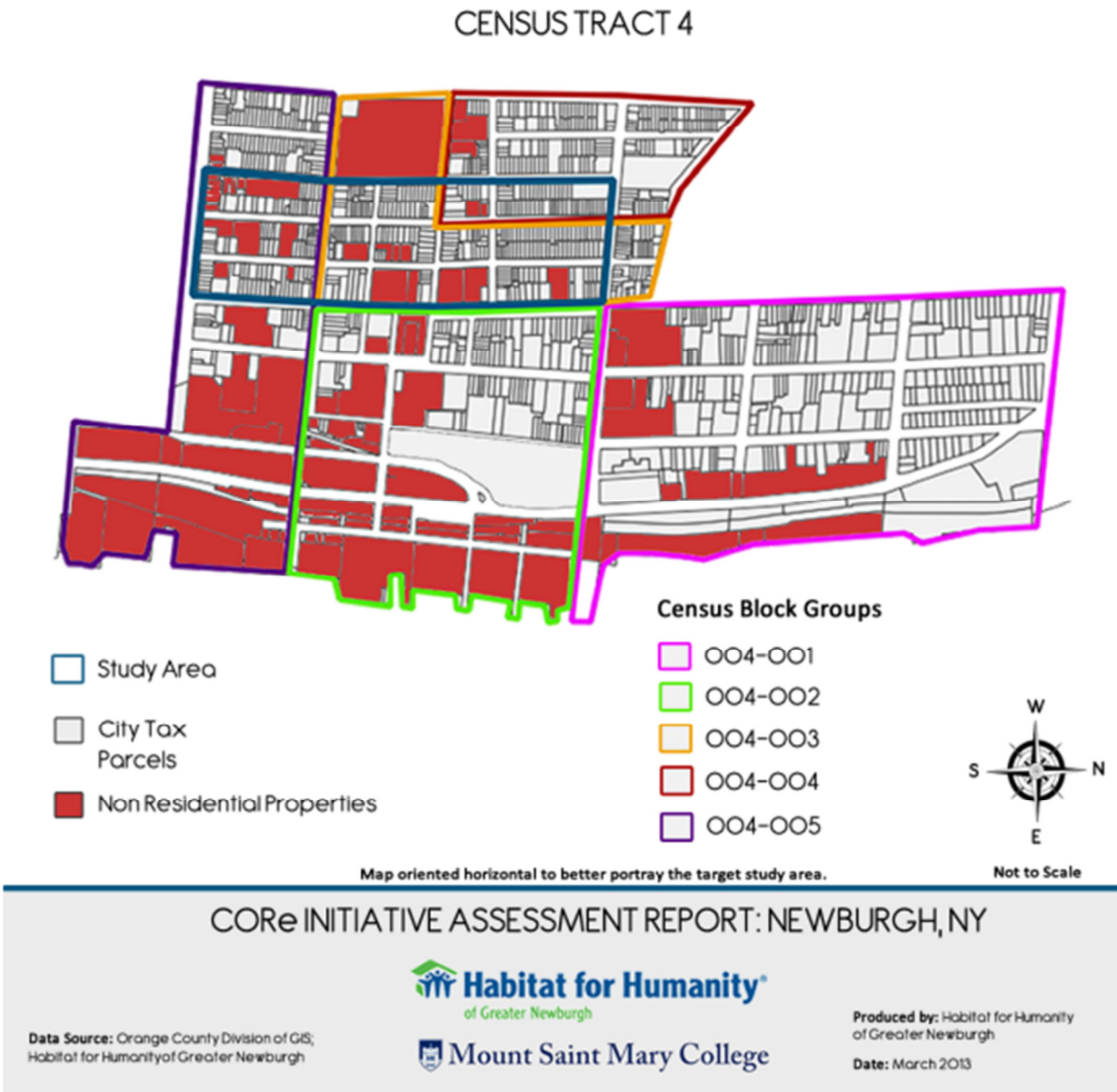
The transitions the City of Newburgh has experience over the years has been more impactful to communities in Census Tracts 4 as well as 5. With the passing of the industrial activity in Newburgh, business activity in the city of Newburgh which had its hub in these two tracts slowly, but surely, began to decline. Younger generations who grew up in Newburgh could not afford to stay in a city where they could not be employed. Over the years, the hundreds of homes that were used to house middle class working families in the southwestern<sup>5</sup> portion of Census Tract 4 fell into the hands of absentee landlords and almost as many were left vacant to deteriorate. The combination of the two has left a large imprint of vacant and horridly sub-standard housing properties in this neighborhood.

<sup>4</sup> 2007 Economic Census, 2007 Economic Census of Island Areas, and 2007 Nonemployer Statistics. Data released on a flow basis between March 2009 through mid-2011.

<sup>5</sup> See Figure 1.

While the population of the city has not experienced major growth over the last half-century, The housing stock of the city and of this census tract in particular, has declined at an alarming rate; leaving people few options but to be renters in properties that often are not up to code. (City of Newburgh Historian, 2012)

FIGURE 2. CENSUS TRACT 4 CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS & NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES



Population demographics at the census tract level reveal a much more accurate picture of Newburgh. With regards to age, Census Tract 4 is not significantly different than the City of Newburgh. According to 2010 Census data, both Census Tract 4 and the City of Newburgh have high concentration of youth with 36.21% and 35.41% respectively. These values are lower when compared to New York state, where only 19.27% of residents are under the age of 19. While age demographics at the city level are similar, ethnic distribution is vastly different in Census Tract 4 versus the city, 55.72% of residents are African-

American, 23.78% are White, and 28.77% are Hispanic. This differs from the City of Newburgh where 47.86% of the population is Hispanic, 39.38% is White, and 30.16% is African-American, see Table 5 below.

Also shown in Table 5, only 41.84% of Census Tract 4 residents have graduated high school, which is higher than the City of Newburgh in which only 35.87% of residents are high school graduates. Both the City of Newburgh and Census Tract 4 are substantially lower than New York State, where 84.45% of the residents are high school graduates.

TABLE 5. POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS - CENSUS TRACT 4 & CITY OF NEWBURGH (CENSUS 2010)

	Census Tract 4		City of Newburgh	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Age</b>				
Under 5 years	496	10.01%	2,726	9.44%
5 to 9 years	459	9.26%	2,421	8.39%
10 to 14 years	417	8.41%	2,332	8.08%
15 to 19 years	423	8.53%	2,742	9.50%
20 to 24 years	398	8.03%	2,686	9.31%
25 to 34 years	805	16.24%	4,557	15.79%
35 to 44 years	582	11.74%	3,756	13.01%
45 to 54 years	583	11.76%	3,161	10.95%
55 to 64 years	375	7.57%	2,239	7.76%
65 to 74 years	272	5.49%	1,291	4.47%
75 to 84	127	2.56%	687	2.38%
85 years and over	20	0.40%	268	0.93%
<b>Race</b>				
White	1,179	23.78%	11,368	39.38%
Black	2,762	55.72%	8,706	30.16%
Hispanic	1,426	28.77%	13,814	47.86%
Asian	24	0.48%	282	0.98%
Native	57	1.15%	508	1.76%
One Race, Other	636	12.83%	6,510	22.55%
Two or More Races	299	6.03%	1,492	5.17%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>				
Less Than High School	644	23.68%	5,319	32.82%
High School Graduate	1,138	41.84%	5,814	35.87%
Some College / Associate	567	20.85%	3,074	18.97%
Bachelor Degree	193	7.10%	1,261	7.78%
Master or Higher	178	6.54%	740	4.57%

When it comes to income statistics, Census Tract 4 has lower households earnings compared to the City of Newburgh. Table 6 indicates that while only 12.72% of the households in the City of Newburgh earn less than \$10,000 over a year, 19.2% of households in Census Tract 4 earn less than \$10,000. And again, while only about 26% of the City of Newburgh earn less than \$20,000 per year, 37% of household in Census Tract 4 earn less than \$20,000 per year. The result is that 36% of the households in Census Tract

4 live in poverty compared to 22% in the City of Newburgh, and 11% of the households in New York State.

TABLE 6. INCOME IN CENSUS TRACT 4 COMPARED TO THE CITY OF NEWBURGH (ACS 2006-2010)

Income	Census Tract 4	City of Newburgh
Under \$10,000	19.2%	12.72%
\$10,000-\$20,000	17.9%	13.21%
\$20,000-\$30,000	16.39%	14.25%
\$30,000-\$40,000	15.61%	14.28%
\$40,000-\$50,000	2.6%	7.93%
\$50,000-\$75,000	12.8%	17.32%
\$75,000-\$100,000	6.24%	9.81%
Over \$100,000	6.4%	7.64%

## CENSUS TRACT 4 BLOCK GROUPS

### GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

Based on the previous data, a more in-depth look into Census Tract 4 is needed to establish a foundation of understanding of the study area for this project. In Census Tract 4, there are 5 Block Groups as shown in Figure 2. Census Block Group 1 is bordered by Mount Saint Mary College Campus on the east and has older homes most of which are owner occupied. Census Block Group 2 has two parts—one part has the waterfront businesses, the other part borders the study area of this project. Census Block Group 3 has the least amount of blocks, is next to the hospital and contains the largest section of the study area. Census Block Group 4 runs along the back of the hospital and also contains a section of Lander and Chambers Street. Census Block 5 contains the first blocks of Lander and Chamber Street, and is bordered by Broadway to the south.

### ETHNICITY

Table 7 shows the ethnic make-up of the block groups within Census Tract 4. Block Group 1 is similar to The City of Newburgh in terms of the percent of the black and white population, but it is has a lower Hispanic population. In Block Groups 2, 3, 4 & 5, well over 50% of the population is Black, the White population varies between 16.4% and 23.8 percent, and the Hispanic population varies between 21.7% and 35%.

TABLE 7. CENSUS TRACT 4 CENSUS BLOCK GROUP ETHNICITY (CENSUS 2010)

	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 3	Block Group 4	Block Group 5	City of Newburgh
<b>Population</b>	1120	919	970	1119	829	28,866
%Whites	35.5%	23.8%	16.4%	20.4%	21.1%	39.4%
%Hispanics	25.6%	21.7%	31.1%	35%	29.7%	47.9%
%Blacks	47.2%	63.2%	58.8%	55.7%	55.4%	30.2%
%Asians	0.6%	0.4%	0.2%	0.6%	0.5%	1.0%
%Others	16.6%	12.5%	24.6%	23.3%	23%	22.5%

*HOUSING*

Block Groups 3, 4 & 5 have a higher number of vacant housing units compared to other block groups, and compared to the City of Newburgh as indicated in Table 8. Census block group 3 and 5 have double the percent of vacant housing units compared to the city. Census block groups 1 and 2 are very similar to the City of Newburgh with respect to the percent of vacant/occupied housing units and percent of owner/renter occupied.

TABLE 8. CENSUS BLOCK GROUP HOUSING (CENSUS 2010)

	Block Group 1	Block Group 2	Block Group 3	Block Group 4	Block Group 5	City of Newburgh
<b>Population</b>	1120	919	970	1119	829	28,866
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	515	460	465	455	440	10505
<b>Units per capita</b>	0.46	0.50	0.48	0.41	0.53	0.36
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	437 (84.85%)	393 (85.43%)	306 (65.81%)	352 (77.36%)	300 (68.18%)	9030 (85.96%)
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	78 (15.15%)	67 (14.57%)	159 (34.19%)	103 (22.64%)	140 (31.82%)	1475 (14.04%)
<b>Owner Occupied</b>	142 (27.57%)	32 (6.96%)	43 (9.25%)	56 (12.31%)	18 (4.09%)	2867 (27.29%)
<b>Renter Occupied</b>	295 (57.28%)	361 (78.48%)	263 (56.56%)	296 (65.05%)	282 (64.09%)	6163 (58.67%)

A closer look at the population of each Block Group and the corresponding housing units suggests inadequate housing availability; this again contributes to densely populated blocks even within the Block Groups which is consistent with what is observed at the city level.

*INCOME*

Table 9 shows that while block group 1 and 2 are similar to the city in terms of median salary, block groups 3, 4, 5 are considerably lower, and block group 5's median salary is \$20,266 which is 43% lower than the median salary of the City of Newburgh.

TABLE 9. CENSUS BLOCK GROUP & CITY OF NEWBURGH MEDIAN INCOME

	Block Group 0004000-1	Block Group 0004000-2	Block Group 0004000-3	Block Group 0004000-4	Block Group 0004000-5	The City Newburgh
<b>Median Income</b>	\$32,083	\$36,051	\$26,411	\$26,107	\$20,266	\$36,153

The above mentioned characteristics regarding population demographics, housing, and income by in large translate appropriately within each Block Group. As the next section will show, the blocks in the study area which is contained in Block Groups 3, 4, and 5 are reflective of the Block Group characteristics and portray a much more accurate picture of what Census Tract 4 is like on ground level.

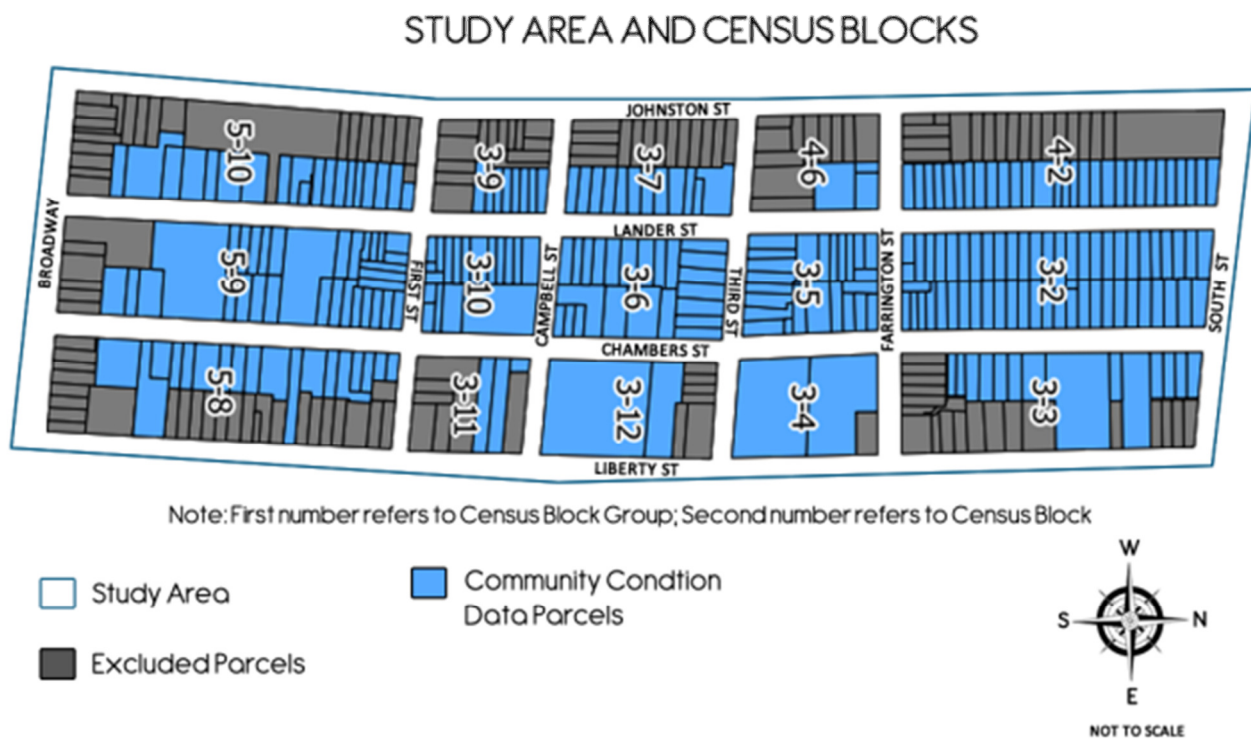


### C. CHAMBERS & LANDER STREET NEIGHBORHOOD

The designation of this neighborhood originates from the name of the two streets around which the majority of the community conditions data was collected. The Chamber & Lander Street neighborhood, shown below in Figure 3, goes through Census Block Groups 3, 4 & 5 as shown in Figure 2. There are several reasons why this particular area was chosen as the study area: it is an identified police target area, and the blocks within this study area are a good representative of the surrounding blocks in regards to population demographics, social and economic characteristics.

The rich history of the neighborhood and the people who used to live in it contribute to its character and style. Many of the families who lived in this neighborhood during the 1950s and previously could relate to each other socially and economically. It is telling from the row house development of houses in this neighborhood that this once was a very tightly knit community of neighbors. This neighborhood contains some of the hardest hit blocks from the economic down turn of Newburgh; the current conditions of this neighborhood are vastly different.

FIGURE 3. CHAMBERS/LANDER STREET NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS BLOCKS



## CORE INITIATIVE ASSESSMENT REPORT: NEWBURGH, NY



Data Source: Orange County Division of GIS;  
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Date: March 2013

STATISTICS

Table 10 indicates the population and housing characteristics at the Census Block level within the study area. Census Block boundaries are indicated in Figure 3. As the table indicates, population make-up differs from block to block within the study area. A statistic that notably stands out is the median age of Census Block 3-2, which is 19.8, of which the median male age is 16.8.

TABLE 10. STUDY AREA CENSUS BLOCK POPULATION (CENSUS 2010)

Census Block	Study Area	Census Block Group 3							Census Block Group 4		Census Block Group 5		
		2	3	5	6	7	9	10	2	6	8	9	10
Population	1345	185	92	99	92	69	91	22	328	48	142	113	64
% White	18.07	11.9	18.7	17.2	17.4	18.8	11	27.3	10.4	16.7	25.4	38.9	3.1
% Black	57.34	67.6	42.3	65.7	58.7	37.7	65.9	59.1	67.7	60.4	52.1	26.5	84.4
%Hispanic	29.37	35.7	40.1	1.0	29.3	47.8	29.7	31.8	25.6	12.5	38.8	46	14.1
Median Age	26.14	19.8	23.5	26.7	29	27.3	22.5	26	29.9	26.5	29	27.5	26
Median Age - Male	39.33	16.8	24.5	26.2	29.5	27.3	22.3	22	31.4	27.5	28.5	28.8	23.3
Median Age - Female	25.68	22.5	23.2	28	26.5	27.5	22.7	33.5	28.8	26.5	29.7	26	28.5
% under 19	26.95	50.3	47.1	36.4	39.1	36.2	46.2	36.4	34.1	41.7	31	34.5	39
%Occupied Housing Unit	71.55	63.1	65.2	93.1	69.8	95.5	71.4	39.13	86.8	64	82.5	75.6	52.5
% Vacant Housing Unit	28.46	36.9	34.8	6.9	30.2	4.6	28.6	60.9	13.2	36	17.5	24.4	47.5
% Owner Occupied Units	9.98	6	7.6	13.8	7	36.7	8.6	17.4	6.3	4	0	9.8	2.5
% Renter Occupied Units	61.72	57.2	57.6	79.3	63.8	59.1	62.9	21.8	80.5	60	82.5	65.9	50

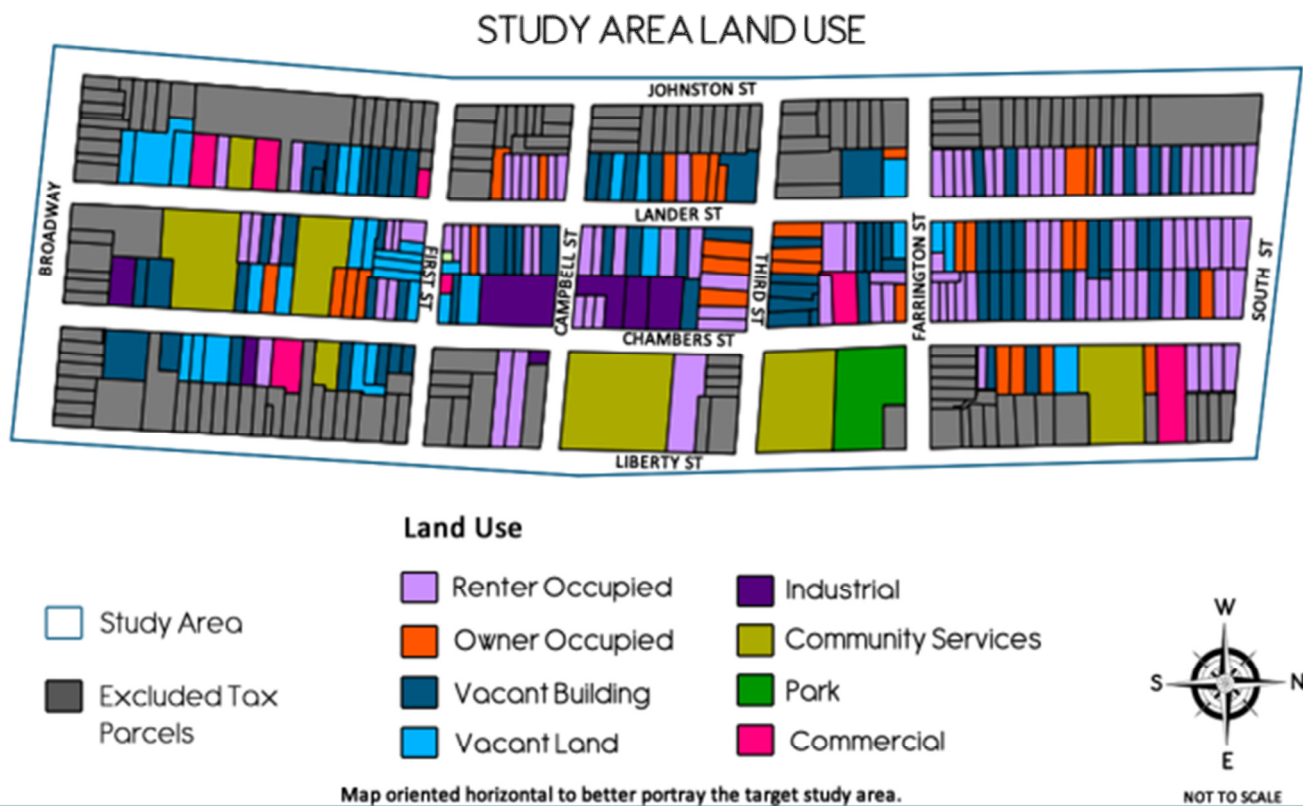
HOUSING & LAND USE

In discussing the housing conditions of the study area it is critical to distinguish between housing units and tax parcels. The Census Bureau uses housing unit to refer to single family homes, dwelling units within the same home, individual apartments within a complex and so forth.<sup>6</sup> Tax parcels are plots of land identified at the County and Municipal level for the purposes of zoning, assessing property values and levying property taxes. We discuss tax parcels in addition to census defined housing units in order to further clarify and put in context the housing conditions of Census Tract 4 and the study area of this project.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix E: U.S. Census Bureau Definitions

Several census blocks stand out in looking at the housing unit data in Table 10. In Census block 3-10 for example, 60.9% of the housing units are vacant, and Census Block 5-8 has no owner occupied housing units, and in Census Block 4-2, 80.5% of units are renter occupied. These statistics however do not fully reflect the lack of adequate housing as Census data accounts for occupied and vacant units only in buildings that are not themselves registered vacant or condemned. There are 101 vacant buildings and land parcels within the study area, which accounts for 40% of the land parcels in the study area. The land use within the study area is heavily residential. As shown in Figure 4, the few non-residential properties are a mix between faith-based institutions, paved lots for parking, industrial, commercial, community services, and one park—bordered by Chambers Street, Farrington Street, and Liberty Street.

FIGURE 4. STUDY AREA LAND USE (2012)



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Data Source: Orange County Division of GIS, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh

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Date: March 2013

Data Obtained from Orange County, NY Division of Real Property & Division of GIS

These social and physical characteristics we believe to all be major factors as we discuss and analyze the community conditions data that were collected as part of this field test.

## D. STUDY DESIGN

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The goal of this field study was to explore the usability and functionality of the Community Conditions data tool by selecting and examining the Chamber/Lander Street neighborhood.

### *STUDY AREA SELECTION.*

One neighborhood was selected for this field study of the community conditions tool based on known indicators of distressed communities such as high crime activity, vacancies, and vested interest on the part of community partners and institutions.<sup>7</sup>

### *DATA TOOL CUSTOMIZATION.*

The ComNet2Go web-based tool developed by the Fund for the City of New York was used to collect and manage data. The conditions and problems customized to the city of Newburgh are listed below in Table 10. These conditions were customized based on existing indicators of urban distress and crime, feedback from community partners and youth involved in the process and capacity of city government to address observed conditions.

### *DATA COLLECTION.*

Conditions were observed and recorded into the ComNet2Go database through a mobile device, the Samsung Galaxy Tab™. Surveys were conducted by local youth from the Center for Hope and supervised by the Neighborhood Revitalization Coordinator of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh.

### *CREATING A CONTEXT*

For the purpose of mapping and analyzing the observed conditions, and also in order to put them in context of various other social issues, the data was merged with social services data from Orange County, crime data from the Newburgh Police Department, and census data as well.

### *ANALYSIS*

The combined data was analyzed statistically and spatially to identify correlations, trends, and identify the capabilities of the community conditions tool at the neighborhood level.

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<sup>7</sup> This area is within the locally defined “Triangle” between St. Luke’s Cornwall Hospital, Mount Saint Mary College, and Orange County Community College. There are a number of faith-based organizations within the area, and recently Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh developed properties in the area as well. Community Voices Heard, a local grassroots organization is most active within this “Triangle” as well.

TABLE 11. NEWBURGH CONDITIONS CUSTOMIZATION

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Occupied Building	Porch →	<i>Deteriorating/Damaged (on scale of 1-3)</i>
	Front yard →	<i>Overgrown weeds and vegetation, trash and debris</i>
	House facade →	<i>Deteriorating( on scale of 1-3), chipped paint, broken windows, damaged siding, graffiti (on scale of 1-3, take photo)</i>
	Lighting →	<i>Lacks exterior street facing lighting</i>
	Other →	<i>Specify what and exactly where, <b>take photos</b></i> <i>If commercial building—what type?(faith based, community organization, home-based childcares, bodegas, etc.)</i>
Sidewalk	Safety →	<i>Extent of deterioration (on scale of 1-3),cracked concrete/bluestone, missing sidewalk/or sections of sidewalk</i>
	Trash/Debris →	<i>Broken glass, barge bins not put away, vast recyclables</i>
	Vegetation →	<i>Weeds growing in sidewalk</i>
	Accessibility →	<i>Wheelchair access to street</i>
	Other →	<i>Specify what and exactly where, <b>take photos</b></i>
Streetscape	Fire hydrant →	<i>Damaged, graffiti (take photo)</i>
	Street Lighting →	<i>Pole needs paint, graffiti (take photo), light not functional, street light missing/needed</i>
	Pavement →	<i>Potholes, weeds and overgrown vegetation, clogged drainage</i>
	Trash/Debris →	<i>Street not swept, extent of trash/debris in the street (on scale of 1-3)</i>
	Other →	<i>Specify what and exactly where, <b>take photos</b></i>
Vacant Lot	Vegetation →	<i>Overgrowing weeds, affecting neighboring properties</i>
	Trash/Debris →	<i>Extent of trash/debris collection on the vacant lot</i>
	Use →	<i>The lot is used by community for some purpose, children play on this lot, people congregate on this lot</i>
	Health related →	<i>Lot poses a health risk( used condoms, needles, broken alcohol bottles, toxic materials)</i>
Congregating	Youth } Adults }	→ { <i>Where: Vacant lot/occupied building/street corner   What is extent of trash/debris on that corner, vacant lot, or wherever else; <b>no photos of people</b></i>
Graffiti	Occupied Building } Vacant Building } Street pole } Street signs } Traffic signs } Fire hydrants }	→ { <i>Extent of the graffiti</i> <b><i>Photo of the graffiti on the feature</i></b>
Public space	Vegetation →	<i>Needs landscaping</i>
	Trash/Debris →	<i>Extent on scale of 1-3</i>
	Health related →	<i>Toxic waste (electronics, batteries etc.); condoms, needles, broken bottles</i>

## II. CHAMBERS & LANDER STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

### A. NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

The focus of this study was to examine the Lander/Chamber Street area of Census Tract 4 in the City of Newburgh. Community condition data was collected for 253 parcels in this neighborhood, indicated in Figure 3. Of the parcels observed, only 6 did not have any problems, while 247 (98%) had at least one problem visible. Table 11 gives an overview of the number of problems per parcel within each Census Block in the study area.

TABLE 12. PROBLEMS OBSERVED IN STUDY AREA

	Census Block Group 3							Census Block Group 4		Census Block Group 5		
	002	003	005	006	007	009	010	002	006	008	009	010
<b>Parcels</b>	54	12	23	20	12	8	19	30	2	16	31	19
<b># of Problems</b>												
0	3			1							2	
1	2	1	2	2		2	1	4		4	3	
2	9	2	2	4			1	9		1	5	
3	7	1	3	5	1	3	3	7	1	3	6	7
4	12	4	6	3	1	3	6	2		1	3	3
5	5	1	2	5	7	2	3	4		1	4	3
6	9	1			1	2					3	5
7	5		3	2		2	3	2		3	2	
8			4		1			2	1			1
9			2							2		
10		1			1						1	
11										1		
<b>Total Problems</b>	207	47	120	79	66	59	79	101	11	74	106	81
<b>Mean Problems</b>	3.8	4.8	4.0	3.1	5.5	5	4.1	3.3	5.5	4.5	4.0	4.5
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	1.9	2.4	2.5	1.8	2.3	1.9	1.9	2	3.5	3.3	2.3	1.6
<b>% Houses with 5 or more</b>	33	50	22	10	83	63	37	23	50	44	35	47
<b>% Houses with 3 or more</b>	83	92	74	60	100	100	84	53	100	69	68	100

Census blocks 3-007 and 3-009 have the highest mean number of problems per parcel with 5.5 and 5.0 respectively. Census block group 4-006 has a high average but there are only 2 parcels on the block. Census block 4-002 and 3-002 have the lowest mean number of problems with 3.3 and 3.8 respectively. Census blocks 3-007 and 3-009 seem to be in the worst condition, having the highest percentage of parcels with 5 or more problems. Based on the condition data collected, 2% of the parcels had no problems, and 11% of the parcels had 1 or less problems. On the other hand, 40% of the parcels had 5 or more problems.

Table 12 breaks down the problems observed further, it also indicates the percent of parcels that were vacant within each census block. Parcel vacancy was obtained from Orange County Division of Real Property, City of Newburgh Vacant Registry records, and also supported by Pace University Land Use Law Center’s (2-year) Vacant Property Analysis which was concluded in August of 2012. All three of the mentioned sources were used and cross referenced with public utility and bank records. The area also had a considerable number of vacant properties, accounting for 101 or 40 % of the parcels. Half of the blocks in the study have over 50% of the parcels vacant.

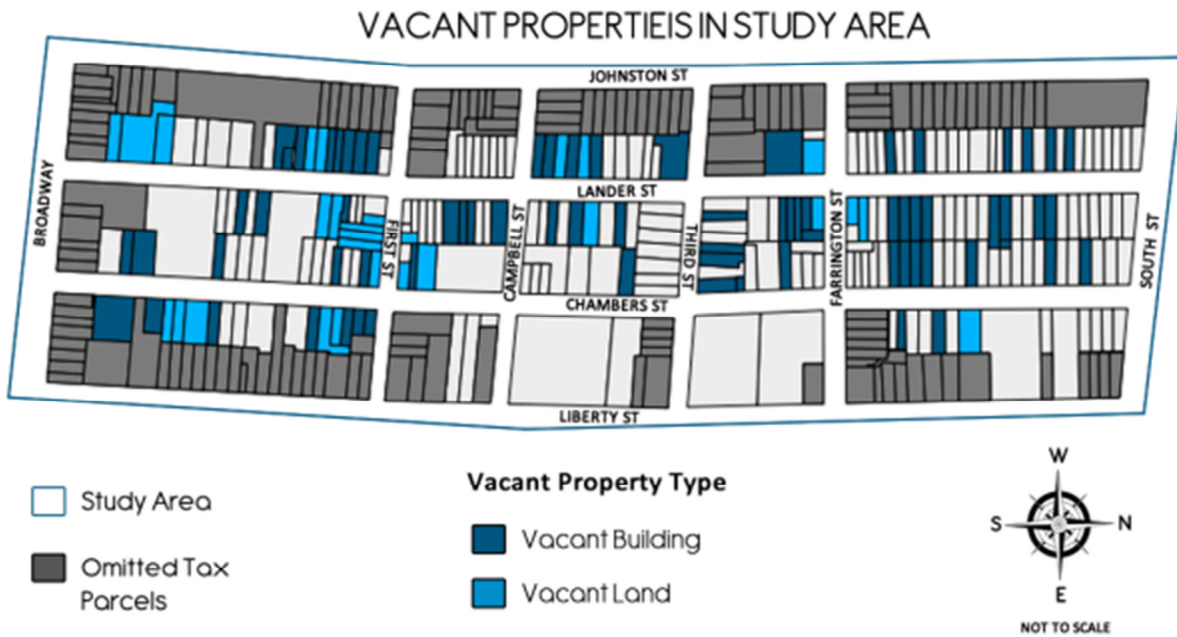
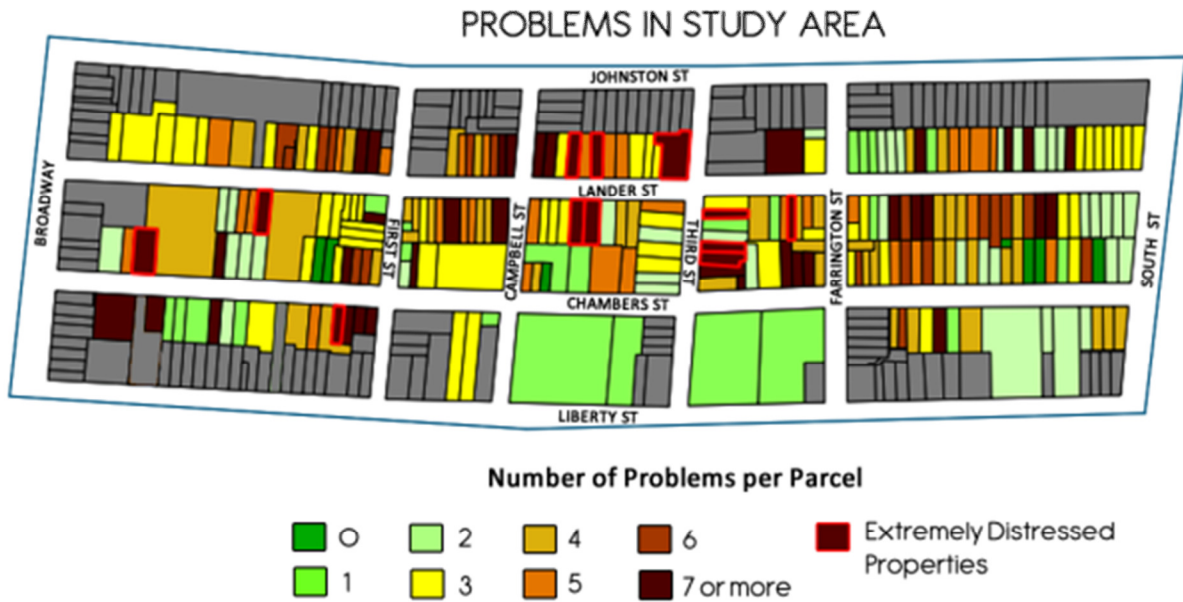
TABLE 13. STUDY AREA CENSUS BLOCKS CONDITIONS BREAKDOWN

Census Blocks	Census Block Group 3							Census Block Group 4		Census Block Group 5		
	002	003	005	006	007	009	010	002	006	008	009	010
<b>Condition</b>												
% Vacant	34	17	54	26	58	36	50	13	100	69	41	67
% Unsecured	0	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	7	11
% W/out ID	2	8	4	0	17	0	0	0	0	13	3	11
% Overgrown	0	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	7	11
% Windows	26	17	42	22	42	57	94	37	100	69	79	89
% Structural	17	17	33	13	50	14	39	17	50	25	17	33
% Porch	53	67	71	39	33	50	17	67	50	13	24	44
% Facade	62	33	54	74	92	36	78	30	50	50	34	44
% Trash/Debris	89	75	79	52	100	86	89	93	100	69	59	89
% Graffiti	21	17	25	13	42	21	22	13	50	40	31	33
% Sidewalk Driveway	62	83	88	78	100	100	72	43	100	94	83	94
%Lighting	8	0	33	17	8	0	18	0	0	38	21	0

The problems that were most prevalent were trash/debris (79%), sidewalk/driveway issues (76%), overgrowth (63%), and façade issues (52%).Trash/Debris was observed in at least 50% of the parcels in all census blocks and was most prevalent in census blocks 3-007 and 4-002. While trash/debris does show neglect, this would be easier to solve the problem compared to structural problems. Census blocks 3-007, 3-010, and 5-010 have the highest percent of structural issues. In census block 4-006, 5-008, 3-007 graffiti was present on 50%, 42%, and 40% of the parcels respectively. Lighting issues were worst in census block 5-008, 3-005, and 3-009 with 38%, 33% and 21% of parcels with problems with lighting respectively.

Figure 5 shows that 12 properties are extremely distressed—these are properties that had more than 7 problems and also taking into account the severity of the problems relative to other parcels in the study area. Additionally, not only do problem properties and non-problems both tend to cluster together, but concentrations of problems appear to follow the pattern of vacant property concentrations.

FIGURE 5. OBSERVE PROBLEMS IN STUDY AREA



## CORE INITIATIVE ASSESSMENT REPORT: NEWBURGH, NY



Data Source: Orange County Division of GIS,  
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh



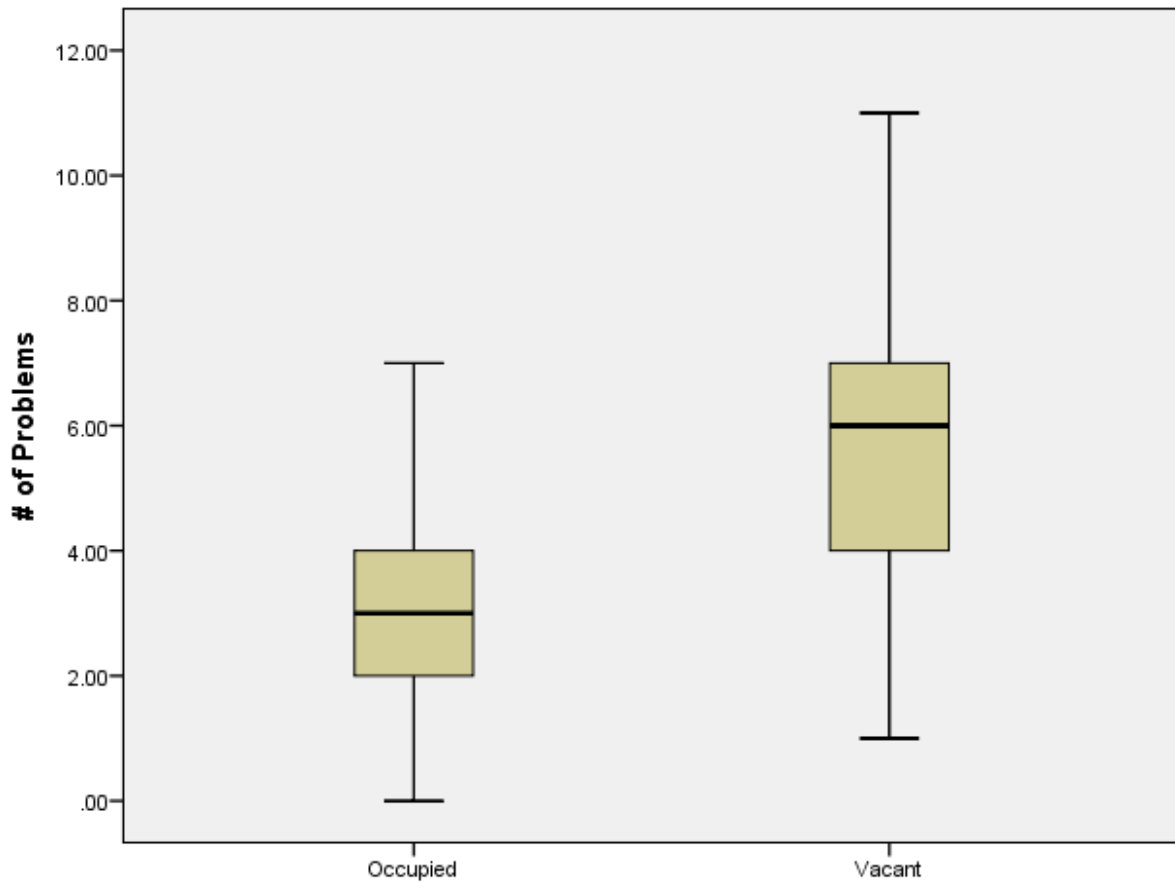
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Of the 253 properties, 101 (40%) are vacant and 152 are occupied. These vacant properties consist of empty lots and vacant buildings. Figure 6 shows a box plot that compares the number of problems in vacant and occupied parcels. Vacant parcels have more observable conditions compared to occupied parcels. The mean number of problems in vacant properties was much higher with 5.6 problems per parcel compared to the 152 occupied properties with a mean number of problems is 3.1 problems. The vacant parcels had more observable problems—70% of vacant parcels had 5 or more problems, compared to the occupied parcels where only 16% had 5 or more problems.

FIGURE 6. CORRELATION BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF PROBLEMS IN VACANT VS. OCCUPIED PARCELS



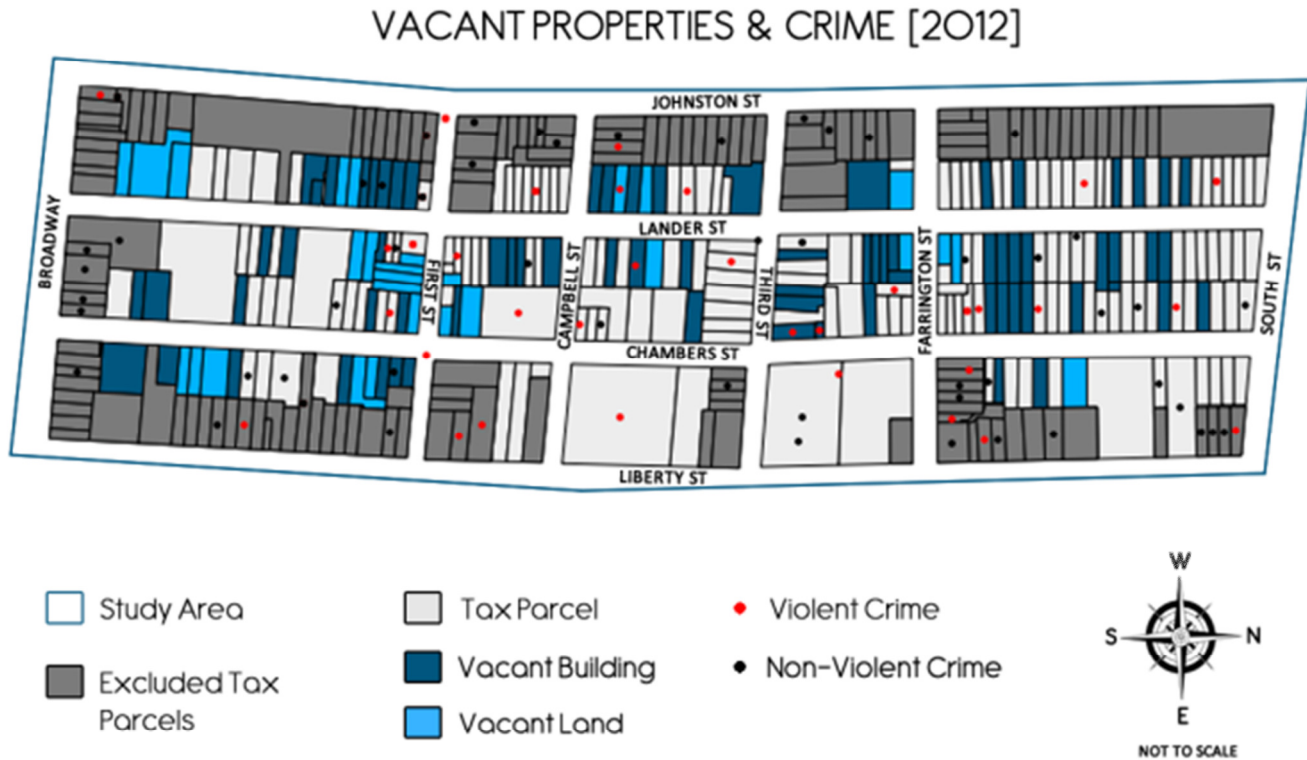
Graffiti was observable in 24% of all the properties, this was higher with 31% of the vacant parcels had graffiti, while 17% of the occupied properties had graffiti. In all 60 cases where graffiti was present, there were at least 2 other problems with the property, but in most cases if graffiti was present there were 5 or more other problems were observed.

Trash or debris was observable in 83% of all the properties, this was higher with 93% of the vacant properties had trash/debris, while 79% of the occupied properties had trash. Appendix C shows some of the observed trash and debris in the study area. Chambers Street is an example of typical trash/debris.

## B. CRIME

Another purpose of this study was to analyze the crime data available for to determine if there was a relationship between criminal activity and neighborhood parcel conditions. Figure 7 indicates all the crime incidents within the study area.

FIGURE 7. CRIME OVER VACANT PROPERTIES IN STUDY AREA



## CORE INITIATIVE ASSESSMENT REPORT: NEWBURGH, NY



**Data Source:** Orange County Division of GIS;  
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh;  
City of Newburgh Police Department



**Produced by:** Habitat for Humanity  
of Greater Newburgh

**Date:** March 2013

Table 12 on the next page breaks down violent crime, total crime, and crime rates by block in the Chamber & Lander Street area organized by census block. There were 17 (6.7%) properties that reported more than one crime and 12 (4.7%) properties with more than two crimes. Hot spots for crime seem to be along Broadway, and clusters in certain areas, as show in Figure 7 above.

TABLE 14. CRIME IN STUDY AREA (2012)

Block	Block Group 3							Block Group 4		Block Group 5		
	2	3	5	6	7	9	10	2	6	8	9	10
Total Violent Crime	7	4	4	3	3	1	2	3	0	7	4	7
Total Crime	13	17	4	4	8	7	4	5	7	16	12	14
Violent Crime Rate Per 100,000	378 3	4348	4040	3260	4347	1098	2198	914	0	4929	3540	1093
Total Crime Rate Per 1000,000	702 7	1847	4040	4347	11594	7692	4396	1524	14583	11267	10619	2187 5

There were 17 (6.7%) properties that reported more than one crime and 12 (4.7%) properties with more than two crimes. Clusters of crime seem to be along Broadway, and in concentrated in certain sections of the study area, see Figure 7.

In addition, out of the 253 parcels, in the Chambers & Lander Street area, 42 (16.8%) parcels had an arrest at an address within the area that property conditions were recorded, and 208 (82.2%) did not have an arrest. Of the 211 that did not have an arrest, the mean number of problems observed was 3.9. Twenty-two properties had one arrest, and their mean property condition was higher at 4.3, and the mean number of problems for properties with 2 or more arrests was 4.4.

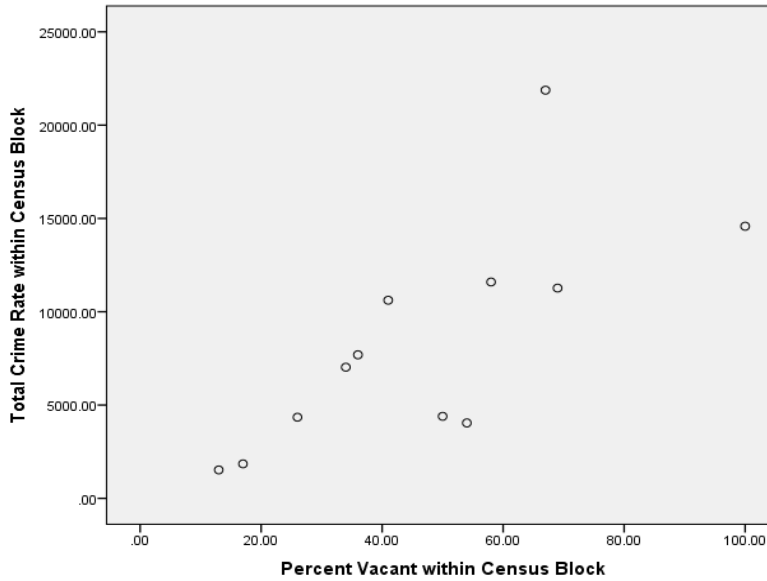
### C. CORRELATION OF CRIME AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

#### CRIME & VACANCY

Establishing a connection between crime and community conditions is key prerogative of CORE. This study initially examined the correlation between by census tract. The violent crime rates were matched with the vacancy rate for each census tract and run through a regression analysis. Vacancy served as the independent variable and violent crime rate as the dependent variable. The regression analysis determined that there is a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.964$ ) between vacancy rate and crime rate by census tract with the p value of .002 shows the relationship seems to be significant at the .01 level. While the n value is low, this study went further to track the data by magnifying to the census blocks within the study area.

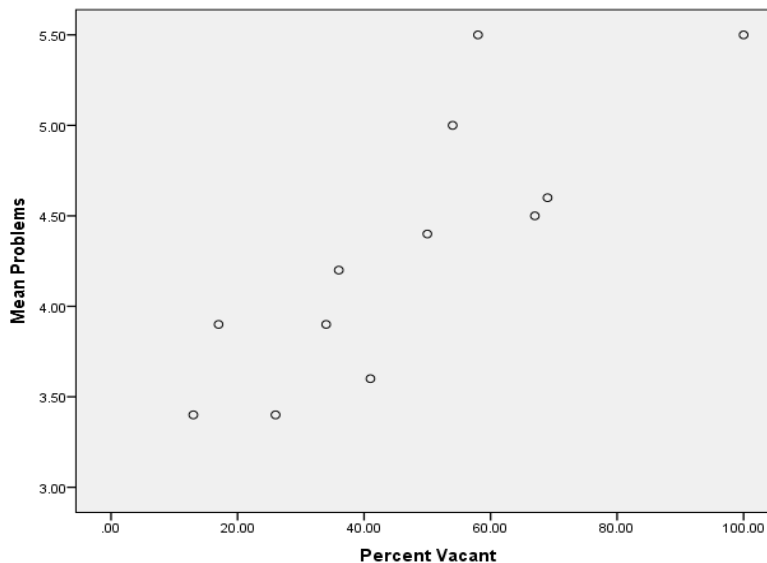
When examining the 12 census blocks that contain the 253 community condition parcels, vacancy rate within the census block served as the independent variable and total crime rate was the dependent variable. The regression analysis determined a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.733$ ) between vacancy rate and total crime rate with the p value of 0.007 shows the relationship seems to be significant at the .01 level. Figure 8 shows the correlation between the two variables obtained from regression analysis.

FIGURE 8. CENSUS BLOCK CRIME & VACANCY CORRELATION



Regression analysis also determined a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.825$ ) between the percent vacant in a census block and the mean problems per parcel in a census block. Figure 9 shows the correlation with a p-value 0.001 which shows that the relationship is significant. While  $n=12$  represents 12 city blocks, there are 253 parcels within each block. As we extend this further, we expect the results to be similar city wide.

FIGURE 9. CENSUS BLOCK CORRELATION BETWEEN VACANT PROPERTIES AND PROBLEMS OBSERVED



Vacant buildings have a large effect on the City of Newburgh. Vacant buildings become eyesores, and could attract crime and reduce the value of surrounds properties. These costs fall on the taxpayers, property owners, and ultimately all members of the community. These areas become more of a drain on the city's resources.

A key ill associated with high levels of vacant and condemned buildings is vandalism can be in the form of broken windows or graffiti. Vandals will also steal copper piping used for plumbing in the property. While the monetary value of copper piping is small, vandals will steal and turn it in for scrap. This value is a much larger loss to the value of the property. The costs to replace piping could cost up to \$10,000-\$20,000. (Simon, 2011)

Vacant properties have also been shown to be a contributing factor to increased crime rates in neighborhoods (Simon, 2011). Less occupied properties means less citizens being present in their communities. Therefore the lack of presence increases the perception that one is not being watched, which in turn increases likelihood of crime occurrences (Jacobs, 1961). These vacant properties reduce the number of “eyes on the street” and thus increase opportunities for crime. Therefore vacant properties have both a direct and non-direct cost to the city.

In areas with increased vacancies such as census tract 4, more crime is occurring and the city reacts with a greater police presence. The increased crime means more expenses in terms of police costs, trial costs, and incarceration costs. These reactionary measures are additional costs to the city well.

The other impact of vacant properties is the lost value of nearby properties. Vacant properties diminish the value of nearby properties somewhere between 1 and 9 percent (Simon, 2011). Lost property value leads to lost tax revenue. Vacant homes, if sold will most likely sell at a discounted rate, which also produces less sales tax. Therefore other property owners in the city have to compensate for the city’s lost tax revenue due occurring from vacant properties.

In conclusion, high concentrations of vacant and condemned properties have an impact that is felt at the community level, and also at the local government level.

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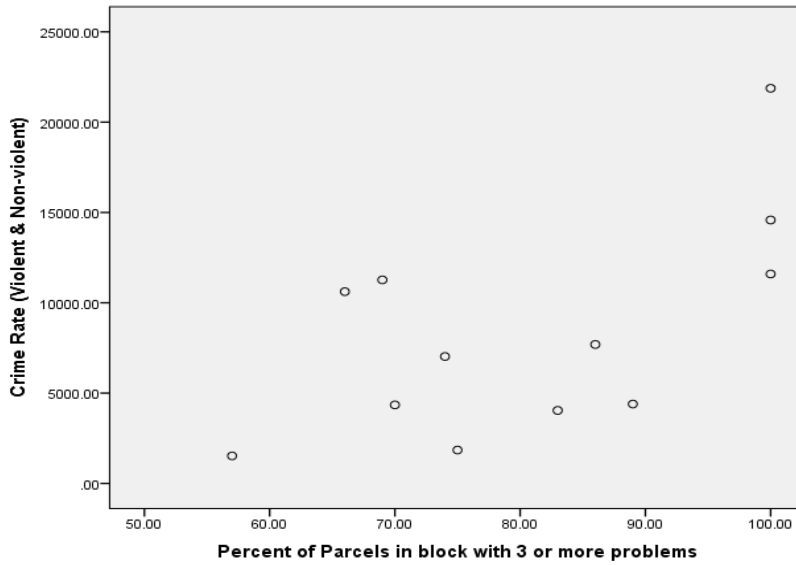
## CRIME & PROBLEMS OBSERVED

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When examining the 12 census blocks in the city of Newburgh that contains the 253 parcels observed in this study, each census block contains a varying amount of land parcels depending on the size of the parcel. Given two blocks the same size, one may have only 2 or 3 parcels while the other has a multitude, such as census blocks 3-12 and 3-6, see Figure 3.

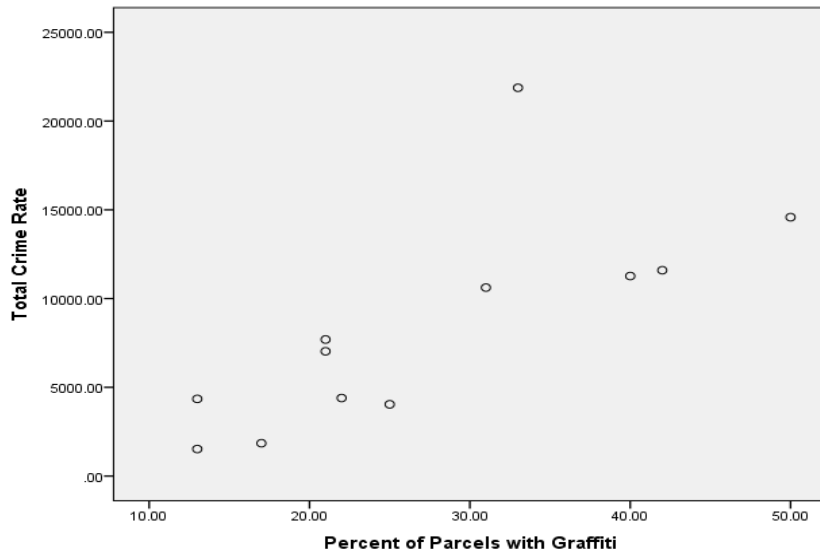
Problems were recorded at each parcel, and properties with 3 or more problems could be defined as needed minor repair. We examined properties that needed minor repairs and to determine if there was a relationship between community conditions and crime. The percent of parcels that need minor repairs (3 or more problems) was the independent variable and total crime rate was the dependent variable. The regression analysis determined a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.612$ ) between vacancy rate and total crime rate with the p value of 0.03 shows the relationship seems to be significant at the .05 level. Figure 10 indicates that as the percent of properties with 3 or more problems increases, the crime rate also increases in the census block.

FIGURE 10. CORRELATION BETWEEN CRIME RATE AND PROBLEMS



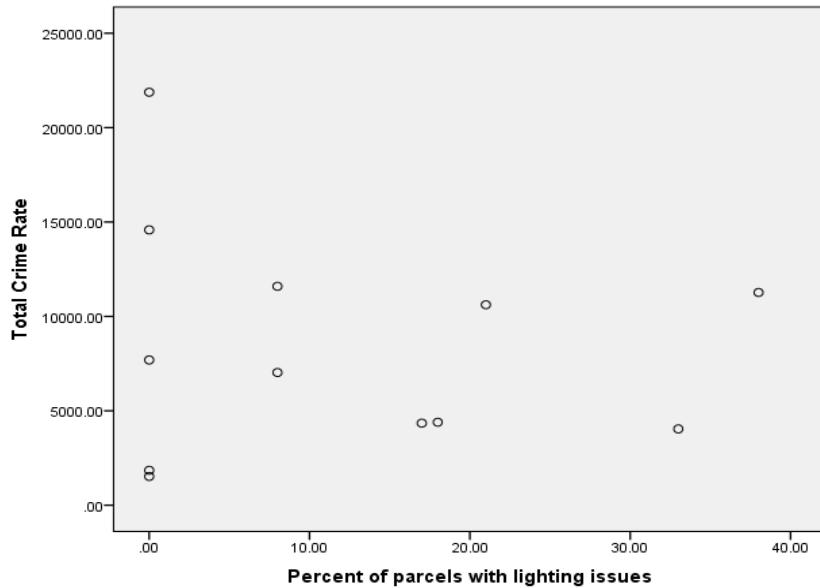
The presence of graffiti seemed to also have a relationship to the crime rate. We examined the relationship between percent of parcels with graffiti and crime rate within a census block. The regression analysis determined to be a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.741$ ) between the percentage of parcels with graffiti and crime rate in a census block. Figure 11 illustrates the relationship that seems to be significant at the .001 level with a p value of 0.006.

FIGURE 11. CORRELATION BETWEEN CRIME AND GRAFFITI



In addition, lighting issues also seemed to have a relationship to the crime rate. Regression also indicated a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.630$ ) between the percent of parcels that have lighting issues and the crime rate in each census block. Figure 12 shows that with a p value of 0.028 that the correlation seems significant at the 0.05 level.

FIGURE 12. CORRELATION BETWEEN CRIME AND LIGHTING PROBLEMS



**GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

The problems observed as part of this field study cost the city as well as tax payers. Of the 28,866 residence in the City of Newburgh there are 3,225 recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, this percent is approximately 11% of the population. In the study area, there are 473 recipients of SNAP which is much higher than the city’s percent. As you can see in Table 13, in some blocks such as at census block 3-3 and 3-7, the percent is as high as 87 and 72. Most of the census blocks in the target area are above the city’s percentage.

TABLE 15. STUDY POPULATION RECEIVING SNAP & TANF (ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES 2012)

	Block Group 3							Block Group 4		Block Group 5		
	2	3	5	6	7	9	10	2	6	8	9	10
<b>Population</b>	185	92	99	92	69	91	22	328	48	142	113	64
<b>People on SNAP</b>	60	80	8	8	50	36	13	125	8	37	14	34
<b>% on SNAP</b>	32	87	8	9	72	40	59	38	17	26	12	53
<b>People used TANF</b>	57	4	7	16	0	2	22	77	0	9	11	11
<b>% used TANF</b>	31	4	7	17	0	2	100	23	0	6	10	17

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. The percent of people that have used TANF compared to the population in the target area is higher than the percent in the city. The City of Newburgh’s percent is about 7% with 1,996 people that have received TANF; this percent is just of double in the target region at 16%.

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## CONDITIONS REPORTING

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The community condition data was collected via the ComNet2Go tool which was equipped with back-end access to create a contact list of referral point persons for certain observed conditions and problems. This contact list was updated by the Center for Hope you interns and emails were sent out to code enforcement officers via email. The project coordinator at Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh will continue with follow up of the referrals made.

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### III. PROJECT PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

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The philosophy of CORE to address the distressed urban areas as a whole is a valuable and appropriate response. To be successful, making the transition to this type of approach must take into account the organizational and cultural shifts that will be needed. It will have to involve both the insistence and support from the New York State CORE team and strong leadership from the lead agency to navigate the cultural change. Additionally, there will need to be incentives for and consequences for not adhering to a collaborative process. The following are recommended to support the overall success of the project.

#### A. PROJECT LEADERSHIP & COMMUNICATION

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Several individuals and organizations were committed to the purpose of the field study. Yet that dedicated group would need to expand to fully encompass the scope and potential of the project. Moving forward we suggest:

- In the beginning, create a representative body that involves representatives from lead and other partnering organizations, key city departments, key service providers and residents that meet regularly. This group needs to be able to transcend their respective affiliations to establish a larger perspective of what is best for the city. This body will:
  - Facilitate the establishment of a research plan and an action plan
  - Monitor the implementation of both plans
  - Assess progress of projects and activities of both plans
  - Respond to and address issues related to not meeting the timeframe of both plans
  - Revise plans as needed
  - Coordinate community efforts to establish Neighborhood Plans
- Align funding to the plans.

#### B. DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT

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While we are proud of the research that we did for the report, we learned a lot through the process and believe the recommendations below reflect that learning and would contribute to an effective research and data collection process.

- Ample time needs to be given to the development of a research plan to ensure that appropriate data is collected to answer the research questions being asked, that adequate support for data collection is available, and research partners have the opportunity to be involved.
  - Academic institution needs to be brought in from the beginning
- The selected study area needs to be large enough in both its breadth and depth.
  - A minimum of a 4 block area needs to be studied to ensure adequate opportunity for correlation
- The selected study area needs to be identified with the following criteria
  - Potential for improvement
  - Potential for involvement of community partners

- Knowledge that other social indicators of distress are available and can be applied to area
  - Area has potential to serve as a model for replication after revitalization projects are completed
- Data collection process should be designed from a property-based system rather than a problem-based system to allow for assets to emerge and to prevent it only being an observation of negative conditions. This type of process allows for extrapolation of what conditions create the tipping point between neighborhood distress and health.
- Layer, analyze, and compare data from the area by
  - City-wide
  - Census Tract
  - Census Block Group
  - Census Block
- Clear metrics/rubrics need to be established that align with other metrics from relevant research literature to ensure valid comparison.
- Determine a way to weight violations beyond just a counting of the number of problems to account for the difference between the presence of trash and structural issues to the building. There should be a ranking or scoring system within individual problem categories.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps there is a way to assign a dollar value to each problem as well as determining the short and long term consequences of not doing anything.
- Timing of participant observation and data collection needs to take into account the time of year to incorporate weather and light friendly periods.
- City police should be integrated into the process to allow from night observations and collection to occur.
- The study should be on-going to follow the progress occurring in the area to determine and evaluate the impact correlation of remedies to distress indicators.
- The referral process should be integrated into the data collection database to increase efficiency of how the information is shared to with the appropriate city agencies responsible for addressing observed conditions.
  - An inventory of existing systems currently used by city agencies should be conducted to streamline the integration of this process.
  - There needs to be a designated person to follow up that referrals have been addressed
- Sufficient time needs to be given to analyzing the data, which should include face-to-face conversations of all major parties involved in the research efforts.
- Conduct further research regarding the correlation between vacant housing, owner occupied vs. renter occupied and crime. While we have a strong correlation based on census tract data, census block group and census data the sample is small. This study should continue and expand. There should be an effort to track crimes by census blocks and/or by census block groups. If this correlation remains strong, the City should continue to work to positively change these ratios.

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix D for an example of why this distinction needs to be made.

- After initial data collection and referrals, the data collection needs to be repeated in a timely manner to determine if anything has changed and to track the amount of time it takes for a response to be made and how long the change holds. For example how long trash and debris remain not an issue. This process also needs an overlay of what efforts are being made to ameliorate the conditions.
- Create a longitudinal study that will examine the impact of funds being spent by census block. The hope is that using the CORE philosophy and that understanding this data will allow for the creation of a proactive approach to the allocation of funds. Improving the quality of living conditions, decrease the vacancy rate, and decrease owner vs. renter rate will give residence a vested interest into improving the city. This in turn will decrease crime and other social ills.
- Research other communities' strategies for addressing similar issues keeping in mind the size of the City and the scope of the distress. Select options that best fit the capacity of the community.
- Additional recommendations for Mapping, and Data Entry and Coding same as those found in Albany report.

### C. INVOLVING YOUTH IN DATA COLLECTION

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This aspect is critical to address. Our experience working with the youth is that special attention has to be paid to how the youth are involved. A balance has to be achieved between providing local youth opportunities to be involved and ensuring the reliability of data collected.

- A baseline of education needs to be achieved because of the level of critical thinking required to accurately collect and assign value to data. We suggest at least a junior in high school.
- The overall scope of the project needs to be clear to participants.
  - The time commitment
  - The pay arrangements
- Recognize the level of training needed to ensure inter-rater/inter-observer reliability. The type of training may need to vary depending on the participants.
- Incentives for participation need to be strengthened
  - Connection to academic benefits
  - Opportunity to understand their community better
  - Opportunity to have their voice heard

### D. ROLE OF STATE CORE TEAM

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- Clear and distinct communication from the Governor's Office to municipal and community leaders outlining the goals of the initiative, key participants, and the value of their support and participation.
- Support organizations and activities in the community that provide additional quantitative as well as qualitative data and analysis to enhance the overall understanding within the targeted neighborhood area.
  - Placing special emphasis on subjective data collected from community residents
- At onset of project participate in a "kick-off" event to meet with partnering organizations and agencies.
- Provide incentives for collaboration and/or consequences for non-collaboration.

## IV. NEWBURGH CORE RECOMMENDATIONS

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The community conditions field study revealed several areas for consideration for the CORE program as it moves forward in the City of Newburgh and expands into other communities. It corroborated the premise of CORE that indicators of distress tend to aggregate and exacerbate one another in highly distressed communities. It highlighted the value of collaboration and the challenges associated with implementing such a process. It accentuated the realization that organizational and cultural shifts will need to be taken into account. We offer the following recommendations to support the success of the project.

### A. BUILDING GOVERNMENT CAPACITY

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The City of Newburgh is a unique place. The significance of its urban problems does not reflect its relatively small population of just under 30,000 people. With this size comes the reality of the institutional capacity of the city government to adequately respond to these challenges. Years of imbalance between this capacity and needs have resulted in departments being understaffed, insufficient systems and technology, unsatisfactory communication across and sometimes within departments, and inadequate project management. While individual employees and elected officials remain committed to the work that needs to be done there are steps that need to be taken to address some of these gaps in capacity. Even though many of these suggestions are more specific to the City of Newburgh, we believe that understanding the capacity of the government to respond is a critical component of the success of the CORE program.

#### *General Capacity*

- Conduct an organizational ethnography of the city government. The relatively small size of the organization makes this approach possible. Often from these types of studies also emerge changes that can be made relatively easily. It helps shift blame from individuals within the system to inadequacies within the system. Furthermore it can also highlight things that are being done well and identify assets which can be built upon.
  - Communication patterns
    - Interdepartmental communication and coordination particularly around grant funded projects.
    - External communication with agencies and organizations that rely on city services to carry out their work
  - Systems
    - Pathways of projects being completed (not completed)
    - Pathways of accountability
  - Cultural norms and practices
  - Perceived needs of the departments
- Identify and provide adequate technology and changes to systems to support the needed work to be done and the ability to maintain the changes made.

- Recognize that many of the models of communities that provide insight to what the City of Newburgh or any city is facing may have a different level of capacity, usually larger, and make adjustments for that reality.
- Ensure limited resources are being utilized in best manner to meet overall goals.
  - Plan of how to redirect funds when deadlines are not going to be met.

### *Code Enforcement*

Since many of the issues related to the conditions survey relate directly to Code Enforcement, special attention needs to be given to this aspect. Although violations were reported, action was not taken. The lack of response is attributable to some of the general capacity issues above. For example a CDBG sidewalk project slated for completion in June 2012, still has not occurred and Code Enforcement and the Building Committee were either not aware of the project or its status. It is also attributable to the current system itself. Currently, the City of Newburgh with a grant secured by the Greater Newburgh Partnership from the Dyson Foundation is undertaking a Strategic Code Enforcement Initiative for the City of Newburgh, NY. In a memo dated March 4, 2013, Professors Joseph Schilling and Kermit Lind outline the preliminary action plan for development of a “strategic code enforcement initiative.” They state that a

strategic code enforcement refers to the organization of critical assets and resources into a system of activities with clearly identified goals, principles, and procedures. All elements—personnel, agencies and institutions, policies and procedures, planners, decision-makers, and administrators must have a common purpose in which each plays a contributing part. It focuses resources and skills on problems and dysfunctions most critical to getting desired results. It does not presume to be comprehensive, and it does not fail to do what is possible because it is not perfect or comprehensive. Strategic code enforcement operates proactively. To do that requires access to information and data about what is happening, information and data that measures trends and forecasts problems (p. 3).

They go on to identify five priority recommendations 1) to identify a task force, 2) develop a real property data system, 3) develop a technology and communications strategy for streamlining code enforcement, 4) design and convene a community dialogue on landlord-tenant relationship and substandard rental housing, and 5) conduct a series of research projects that provide stronger evidence for creating code enforcement policy and case decisions including: policy and political drivers of public assistance tenants, and the court’s processing of violations and citations.

If followed, we believe this process and approach will address many of the concerns we encountered (lack of response, prioritization, and communication) and establish a viable code enforcement system. We also believe that the CORE project should inform and be connected to this process.

In other communities, it will be critical to assess the capacity of the code enforcement activities and strategically address the deficiencies.

## *Police Department*

Since the crime rate is one of the key factors placing the City of Newburgh at the top of New York State's list of most distressed urban areas, the capacity of the City Police Department must be taken into account.

Andrea Vey, the crime analyst with the Newburgh City Police Department, shared her thoughts about the crime statistics she provided, the overall crime situation, and possible remedies in an email correspondence on 3/19/2013. She states "Crime in Newburgh is a very complex issue with no one solution." She articulates the myriad of social conditions including: "low educational attainment, low home ownership, highly transient population, high poverty, high teen pregnancy rates, alcoholism, drug addiction," as factors contributing to the high crime rate. She also discusses the low social investment of residents when there are such poor conditions in the neighborhood and lack of landlord presence and investment. She adds that further complicating the crime dynamics is the number of un-domiciled parolees placed in the City of Newburgh and the high population under 18, 31% according to the 2010 census.

She goes on to explain that "the job of maintaining order in Newburgh is so much more difficult given all the other issues suffered by the city and its residents." Compounding this reality is reduced resources, a high attrition rate at the Department (estimates that nearly half of the force has left for better pay and job security), and a lack of adequate training. "We struggle to keep up with general calls for service every day. Since we struggle there, we certainly aren't doing much that's proactive anymore." Her correspondence clearly articulates the desire of the department to do more and the subsequent frustration that they are not able to do more because of the lack of officers. She clarifies:

Statistically speaking, I can show that when we have had more officers, our violent crime levels were lower. We were in a better position to maintain order and reduce crime. I can show when we've been able to beef up through overtime or joint patrols and saturate the streets with proactive cops, there has been a reduction in crime. Unfortunately, at this point, a lot of the little things are let go so street officers can focus on the critical incidents and crimes in progress. If you subscribe to "broken windows" theory, letting the little things go leads to bigger and worse problems. My personal opinion, we reached a tipping point a few years ago where our staffing levels have dropped so low that not only was public safety being compromised, but officer safety was compromised as well... Honestly, this department is collapsing under the weight of this entire City. Too much crime – too few cops.

She concludes by offering two critical programmatic areas of focus 1) programs that support and invest in the young children of Newburgh. 2) Increase the capacity of the department to adequately respond to the public safety needs of the city.

We would add that the data should also guide programming options. For example in our data it is clear that their needs to be the development of a graffiti eradication process. Given the fact that a majority of the graffiti is gang related it is an effort that needs to be coordinated with the police department.

Similar to the study of code enforcement, we believe a similar study of strategic capacity of the city police department needs to be undertaken. While this field study demonstrates that just providing additional police officers will not solve the crime situation; it is also true that without an adequate police

force it will not be solved either. Creative solutions need to be part of this type study like the youth policing initiative, other types of community policing efforts, and mounted police. A baseline of an adequate force needs to be determined and funding secured.

## B. BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

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To successfully involve the community in the CORE Initiative its capacity to be involved needs to be addressed. In the City of Newburgh, there is little precedent for consistent, organized and sustained community involvement. Citizens will react to a certain situation at a City Council meeting (i.e. the response to the use of deadly force by the police officers in the shooting of Michael Lembhard in March of 2012). Community Voices Heard is an organization who is making strides to involve the community more in this way. Still, there is more that needs to be done to ensure a sustained level of community involvement and accountability. To that end we recommend:

- Support the creation of Neighborhood Associations and opportunities for them to have a vested interest and voice in what happens in their neighborhoods.
- Charge Neighborhood Associations with helping to collect and review community conditions data, building relationships with city officials accountable for the conditions, making referrals about conditions to the officials, and holding the officials accountable for ameliorating the conditions.
- Encourage renters to be members of the Neighborhood Associations and ensure that the NAs have the conditions of rental units as part of its agenda.
- Establish regular community forums for all Neighborhood Associations to gather and share ideas and concerns.

## C. COORDINATE COMMUNITY EFFORTS AND ESTABLISH NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

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The City of Newburgh is not lacking people and agencies who want to help and who are undertaking efforts to make a difference in this community. The challenge is that these efforts tend to be fragmented, uncoordinated and often duplicate efforts. We anticipate that other communities experience this situation as well. To begin to shift this reality we recommend:

- Circulate and promote the core findings of the data to agencies, organizations and residents within the City of Newburgh.
- Formulate comprehensive neighborhood plans of action that take a focused block approach to producing change that will create success that can be built upon and serve as a model. The plan needs to be developed collaboratively between residents and stakeholders (government agencies, organizations, and service providers). The level of need in the community requires this type of concentrated approach to ensure sustainability of the efforts otherwise it is as if Band-Aids are being applied across the area, but nothing is actually healing and being made whole. Eventually, these neighborhood plans can lead to the development of a larger community plan.
  - The plan(s) needs to clearly delineate the goals, activities, benchmarks and deadlines, and whose responsibilities, as well as establish priorities.

- The creation of this plan needs to be seen as a critical signal of how things will be done differently with this project. Extra care will need to be taken to involve significant input and transparency.
- Utilize the data to align and coordinate the work of agencies and organizations working in the City of Newburgh to address the key findings such as the high vacancy and high renter vs. owner rate, and to strategically improve the quality of living conditions. These efforts in turn will support the decrease in crime and other social ills.
- Utilize neighborhood plans to set funding allocation priorities.
- Determine a funding allocation strategy and enforce accountability
  - The overwhelming level of need in census tracts 4 and 5 requires the development of a strategic and objective formula for determining how funds will be allocated. The formula will consist of many different metrics throughout the City and will help analyze the needs. We suggest that the formula use street level data similar to data that was collected in this study as well as other metrics such as crime rate, renter vs. owner occupied rate, vacancy rate since these variables seem to have a correlation to each other. The formula will create a value for each census block to objectively determine where the funds should be dispersed.
- Develop a method for tracking how funds are being allocated and how much is being spent in each census block.
- To avoid funds that are awarded going unused because the projects have not been implemented, develop a system of benchmarks for project implementation and funding allocation that trigger the opportunity for an outside organization to reallocate funds in a manner which achieves established goals and impact, particularly those identified within neighborhood plans.

#### D. ADDRESSING VACANCY AND HOMEOWNERSHIP

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The pilot program and other studies as well as our work point to the significant need to address vacancy and homeownership due to their direct impact on crime, education, and health. A key focus therefore needs to be on ways to address these two fronts.

- Establish a local *Housing Trust Fund* where funds that have not been used in a timely manner can be deposited as well as other dedicated funds for response to the issues of vacancy and homeownership. Some of these funds can go to the high costs associated with demolition and lead and asbestos abatement.
- Since arrests, courts, incarcerations are all expenses that occur as a result of crime. Instead of increasing funds to react to crime, CORE philosophy is to be proactive and invest money into the City to reduce crime. This study makes the argument that there is a correlation between crime and vacancy, as well as a correlation between renter vs. owner occupied and crime. Therefore, a portion of any federal or state money allocated for reducing crime should be used to improve housing conditions and reduce vacancy.
- The City should support new and existing efforts like
  - Habitat Newburgh's creation of homeownership opportunities for people primarily already living in Census Tracts 4 & 5.



- Newly formed Newburgh Community Land Bank to address vacant properties with business and rental opportunities as well as a focus on targeted homeownership for artists and entrepreneurs.
- Greater Newburgh Partnership's efforts to green vacant lots and increase lighting capacity.
- PathStone's homeowner education classes
- As these efforts begin to change the landscape seek outside developers to increase the work being accomplished. Outside developers need to provide a clear pathway for buyers and renters to prevent adding to the vacancy problem.
- Explore ways to incentivize residents or workers within the City of Newburgh to become a homeowner in Census Tract 4 or 5 or repurpose a vacant building. These incentives should include educational support as well as financial assistance for the purchase price.
- All of these efforts need to be coordinated to ensure the highest capacity for impact.

## E. ADDRESSING YOUTH

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In the City of Newburgh, 44.72% of the population is 24 years old or younger; Census Tract 4 is similar with 44.24%. Given the data and demographics and the unusually young population within Census Tract 4 and the City as a whole,<sup>9</sup> special attention needs to be given to how to address the programmatic priorities of the youth in the community. Here again, key agencies, organizations and individuals need to be brought to the table to identify assets, needs, and priorities. These identified assets, needs, and priorities need to be integrated into the neighborhood plans.

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<sup>9</sup> See Table 5 and Table 10

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## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY CONDITIONS – VACANT BUILDINGS

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FIGURE 13. 52 CHAMBERS STREET



FIGURE 14. 151 LANDER STREET



FIGURE 15. 135-133 LANDER ST



FIGURE 16. 137 LANDER ST



FIGURE 17. 130 THIRD STREET



FIGURE 18. 85 LANDER STREET

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY CONDITIONS – SIDEWALKS

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FIGURE 19. SIDEWALK ALONG FIRST BLOCK OF LANDER STREET

APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY CONDITIONS – RANGE OF TRASH & DEBRIS

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FIGURE 20. 9-11 CHAMBERS STREET: 1



FIGURE 21. 146 CHAMBERS STREET: 2



FIGURE 22. 154 LANDER STREET: 3



## APPENDIX D: CENSUS BUREAU DEFINITIONS\*

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### Living Quarters

Living quarters are classified as either housing units or group quarters. (For more information, see the discussion of "Group Quarters" under Population Characteristics.) Usually, living quarters are in structures intended for residential use (for example, a one-family home, apartment house, hotel or motel, boarding house, or mobile home). Living quarters also may be in structures intended for nonresidential use (for example, the rooms in a warehouse where a guard lives), as well as in places such as tents, vans, shelters for the homeless, dormitories, barracks, and old railroad cars.

**Housing Units**--A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms or a single room occupied as separate living quarters or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible. If that information cannot be obtained, the criteria are applied to the previous occupants.

Both occupied and vacant housing units are included in the housing unit inventory, except that recreational vehicles, boats, vans, tents, railroad cars, and the like are included only if they are occupied as someone's usual place of residence. Vacant mobile homes are included provided they are intended for occupancy on the site where they stand. Vacant mobile homes on dealers' sales lots, at the factory, or in storage yards are excluded from the housing inventory.

If the living quarters contains nine or more persons unrelated to the householder or person in charge (a total of at least 10 unrelated persons), it is classified as group quarters. If the living quarters contains eight or fewer persons unrelated to the householder or person in charge, it is classified as a housing unit.

**Occupied Housing Units**--A housing unit is classified as occupied if it is the usual place of residence of the person or group of persons living in it at the time of enumeration, or if the occupants are only temporarily absent; that is, away on vacation or business. If all the persons staying in the unit at the time of the census have their usual place of residence elsewhere, the unit is classified as vacant. A household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. By definition, the count of occupied housing units for 100-percent tabulations is the same as the count of households or householders. In sample tabulations, the counts of household and occupied housing units may vary slightly because of different sample weighting methods.

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\* Definitions obtained from [http://www.census.gov/geo/lv4help/apen\\_bhous.html#HOUSING](http://www.census.gov/geo/lv4help/apen_bhous.html#HOUSING)

**Vacant Housing Units**--A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere also are classified as vacant. (For more information, see discussion under "Usual Home Elsewhere.") New units not yet occupied are classified as vacant housing units if construction has reached a point where all exterior windows and doors are installed and final usable floors are in place. Vacant units are excluded if they are open to the elements; that is, the roof, walls, windows, and/or doors no longer protect the interior from the elements, or if there is positive evidence (such as a sign on the house or in the block) that the unit is condemned or is to be demolished. Also excluded are quarters being used entirely for nonresidential purposes, such as a store or an office, or quarters used for the storage of business supplies or inventory, machinery, or agricultural products.

### **Boarded-Up Status**

Boarded-up status was obtained from questionnaire item C2 and was determined for all vacant units. Boarded-up units have windows and doors covered by wood, metal, or masonry to protect the interior and to prevent entry into the building. A single-unit structure, a unit in a multi-unit structure, or an entire multi-unit structure may be boarded-up in this way. For certain census data products, boarded-up units are shown only for units in the "Other vacant" category. A unit classified as "Usual home elsewhere" can never be boarded up. (For more information, see the discussion under "Usual Home Elsewhere.")