

2010

Syracuse Blight and Substandard
Determination Study –
Study Areas #1-3



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INTRODUCTION

This Blight and Substandard Determination Study examines existing conditions of land-use, buildings, and structures within the City of Syracuse to determine eligible areas for redevelopment activities. The area included for this analysis includes the area generally described at downtown, the highway corridor running through the city and the industrial areas on the both the north and south edges of Syracuse. A number of potential opportunities for redevelopment exist throughout the study areas which would allow for the City of Syracuse to overcome blighted and substandard conditions. The City of Syracuse, when evaluating blight and substandard conditions, must adhere to the Nebraska Community Development Law, as provided for in the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

The on-going aging and deterioration of existing development within the City of Syracuse has called for an evaluation of the City to identify current substandard conditions or factors contributing to blight and substandard conditions. A field survey was completed on October 21, 2010 within the areas delineated by the City. With the adoption of this study the city will have declared approximately 46% of the existing corporate limits (411.22 acres of 895.64 total acres) as blight/substandard.

The intent of the study is to determine areas within the community where structural and site deterioration has occurred or where there are other negative factors which are decreasing the potential of development. This field survey indicated the community has such deterioration, thus the community warrants further examination with regard to blighted and substandard conditions.

Nebraska's Community Development Law (Neb Rev Stat §§18-2101 to 18-2154) provides guidelines under which municipalities may address concerns and develop strategies for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of deteriorating areas, as well as the prevention and elimination of substandard and blighted areas. The Legislature has declared, in pertinent part:

It is hereby found and declared that there exist in cities of all classes and villages of this state areas which have deteriorated and become substandard and blighted because of the unsafe, insanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded condition of the dwellings therein, or because of inadequate planning of the area, or excessive land coverage by the buildings thereon, or the lack of proper light and air and open space, or because of the defective design and arrangement of the buildings thereon, or faulty street or lot layout, or congested traffic conditions, or economically or socially undesirable land uses...These conditions are beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids herein provided...It is further found and declared that the prevention and elimination of blight is a matter of state policy, public interest, and statewide concern and within the powers and authority inhering in and reserved to the state, in order that the state and its municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by areas which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of their revenue. §18-2102

Consistent with these findings, municipalities have been granted the power to address deterioration, substandard conditions, and blight through any of a number of means, including “the formulation of a workable program, the approval of community redevelopment plans consistent with the general plan for the development of the city, the exercise of its zoning powers, the enforcement of other laws, codes, and regulations, relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, the disposition of any property acquired, and the providing of necessary public improvements.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §18-2104.

The process of improving an area begins with the creation of a municipality-wide workable program for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to address the specific conditions to be improved. Such workable program may include “provision for the prevention of the spread of blight into areas of the municipality which are free from blight through diligent enforcement of housing, zoning, and occupancy controls and standards; the rehabilitation or conservation of substandard and blighted areas or portions thereof by replanning, removing congestion, providing parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements by encouraging voluntary rehabilitation and by compelling the repair and rehabilitation of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; and the clearance and redevelopment of substandard and blighted areas or portions thereof.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §18-2105.

The main substance of a workable program is an adopted general redevelopment plan for a defined area, as well as the subsequent individual redevelopment projects that identify specific projects within a redevelopment area. Prior to adoption of a general redevelopment plan, a municipality must have an adopted comprehensive plan (§18-2110), and shall have declared the redevelopment area to be a substandard and blighted area in need of redevelopment (§18-2109).

The important community development terms are defined in §18-2103, several of which are shown below (*organization and emphasis added*):

(10) **Substandard areas** means an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density of population and overcrowding, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, (which cannot be remedied through construction of prisons), and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare;

(11) **Blighted area** means an area, which

(a) by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, existence of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness, insanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or obsolete platting, or the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use and

(b) in which there is at least one of the following conditions:

(i) Unemployment in the designated area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;

(ii) the average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;

(iii) more than half of the plotted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;

(iv) the per capita income of the area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or

(v) the area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses.

In no event shall a city of the metropolitan, primary, or first class designate more than thirty-five percent of the city as blighted, a city of the second class shall not designate an area larger than fifty percent of the city as blighted, and a village shall not designate an area larger than one hundred percent of the village as blighted;

(12) **Redevelopment project** means any work or undertaking in one or more community redevelopment areas:

(a) To acquire substandard and blighted areas or portions thereof, including lands, structures, or improvements the acquisition of which is necessary or incidental to the proper clearance, development, or redevelopment of such substandard and blighted areas;

(b) to clear any such areas by demolition or removal of existing buildings, structures, streets, utilities, or other improvements thereon and to install, construct, or reconstruct streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, public spaces, public parking facilities, sidewalks or moving sidewalks, convention and civic centers, bus stop shelters, lighting, benches or other similar furniture, trash receptacles, shelters, skywalks and pedestrian and vehicular overpasses and underpasses, and any other necessary public improvements essential to the preparation of sites for uses in accordance with a redevelopment plan;

(c) to sell, lease, or otherwise make available land in such areas for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, or other uses, including parking or other facilities functionally related or subordinate to such uses, or for public use or to retain such land for public use, in accordance with a redevelopment plan; and may also include the preparation of the redevelopment plan, the planning, survey, and other work incident to a redevelopment project and the preparation of all plans and arrangements for carrying out a redevelopment project;

(d) to dispose of all real and personal property or any interest in such property, or assets, cash, or other funds held or used in connection with residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, or other uses, including parking or other facilities functionally related or subordinate to such uses, or any public use specified in a redevelopment plan or project, except that such disposition shall be at its fair value for uses in accordance with the redevelopment plan;

(e) to acquire real property in a community redevelopment area which, under the redevelopment plan, is to be repaired or rehabilitated for dwelling use or related facilities, repair or rehabilitate the structures, and resell the property; and

(f) to carry out plans for a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings or other improvements in accordance with the redevelopment plan;

(13) **Redevelopment plan** means a plan, as it exists from time to time for one or more community redevelopment areas, or for a redevelopment project, which

(a) conforms to the general plan for the municipality as a whole and

(b) is sufficiently complete to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the community redevelopment area, zoning and planning changes, if any, land uses, maximum densities, and building requirements;

The Syracuse Blight and Substandard Study is intended to give the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the Syracuse City Council the basis for determining the existence of blighted and substandard conditions within the City's corporate limits. Through this process, the City attempts to eliminate economic and/or social concerns, which are detrimental to the future public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the entire community.

The findings of the Blight and Substandard Study will guide the structure of the General Redevelopment Plan for these areas. The areas assessed in this study are delineated in Figure 1. The General Redevelopment Plan will contain, local objectives regarding appropriate land uses, improved traffic circulation, public transportation, public utilities, and other public improvements, in accordance with the provisions of the Nebraska Community Development Law. The proposed requirements in the redevelopment area shall include without being limited to:

- The boundaries of the redevelopment project area, with a map showing the existing uses and condition of the real property therein,
- A land-use plan showing proposed uses of the area,
- Information showing the standards of population densities, land coverage, and building intensities in the area after redevelopment,
- A statement of the proposed changes, if any, in zoning ordinances or maps, street layouts, street levels or grades, or building codes and ordinances,
- A site plan of the area, and
- A statement as to the kind and number of additional public facilities or utilities which will be required to support the new land uses in the area after redevelopment.

BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD ELIGIBILITY ANALYSIS

The City of Syracuse selected these areas within and adjacent to the existing corporate limits for evaluation. The areas comprise a mix of land uses, including industrial, commercial, public and residential areas.

These areas were chosen, for a number of reasons, including:

1. The potential for redevelopment activities within the selected area,
2. Areas that are adjacent to areas that contain a high potential for future development due to existing growth and would represent a strong potential for redevelopment,
3. The need for redevelopment of an area due to specific existing conditions, and
4. The need for improvements in infrastructure due to specific existing conditions.

If these areas are determined to be blight and substandard, the City must initiate the process of creating a General Redevelopment Plan.

Through the redevelopment process, the City of Syracuse can guide future development in these areas of the community and provide financial incentives for their development. The use of the Nebraska Community Redevelopment Law by the City of Syracuse is intended to improve the appearance of the community, and enhance the quality of life for all residents. Using the Nebraska Community Development Law, the City of Syracuse can eliminate negative conditions and implement programs and/or projects identified to improve conditions, thereby removing blight and substandard conditions.

FINDINGS OF BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS ELIGIBILITY STUDY

This section reviews the land use, building or structure conditions found within the study areas. This section will review existing conditions based upon the observations of the planning team during the field survey, and will explain identified contributing factors.

Where structural conditions are evaluated, individual structures are rated in accordance with the following rating schedule as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development: no problem, adequate condition, deteriorating condition, or dilapidated condition. The following descriptions define the rating schedule used to assess and evaluate building and structure conditions:

No Problem

- No structural or aesthetic problems are visible.

Adequate Condition

- Slight damage to porches, steps, roofs, etc. is present on the structure,
- Slight wearing away of mortar between bricks, stones, or concrete blocks,
- Small cracks in walls or chimneys,
- Cracked windows,
- Lack of paint, and
- Slight wear on steps, doors, and door and window frames.

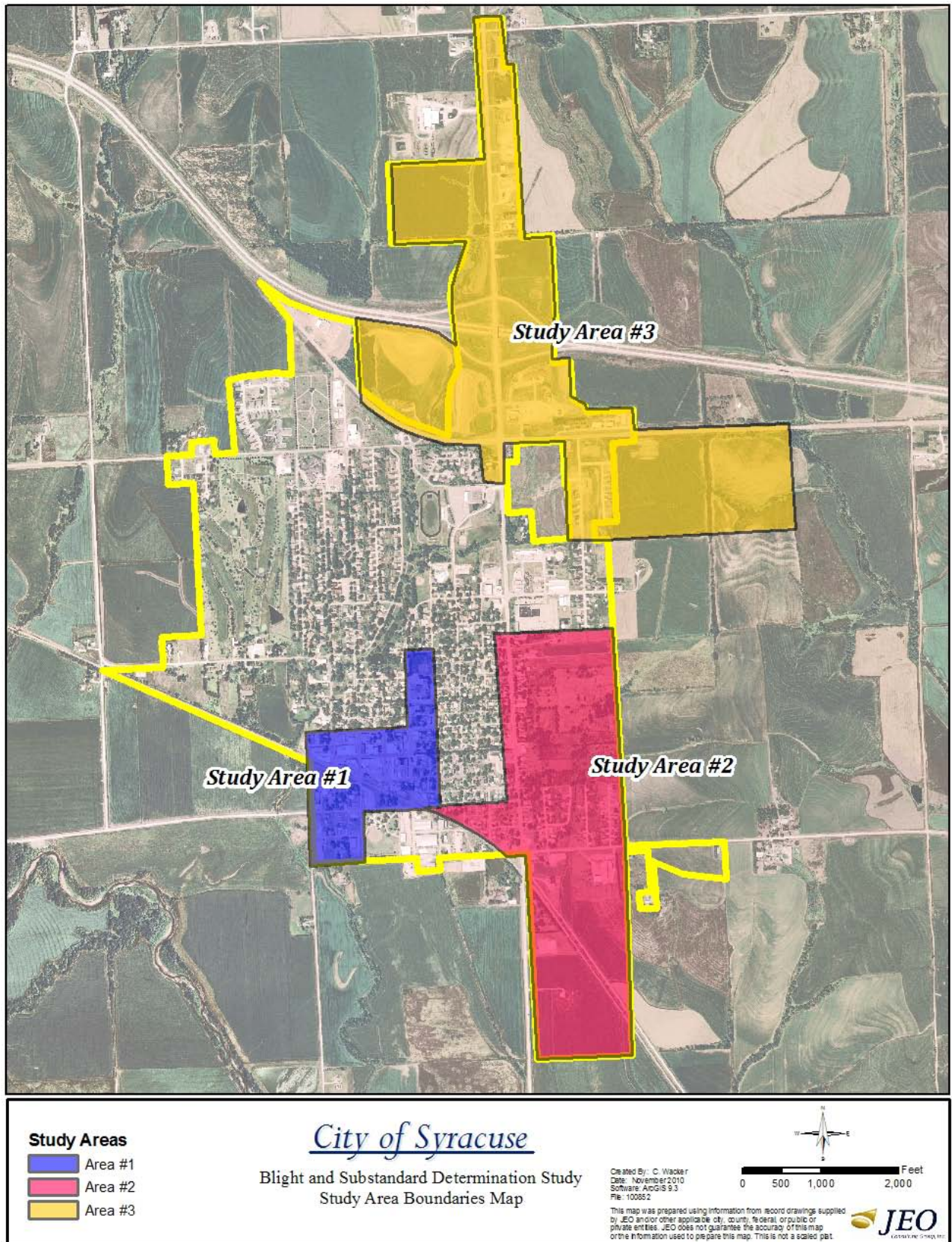
Deteriorating Condition

- Holes, open cracks, rotted, loose, or missing materials in parts of the foundation, walls, (up to one-quarter of the wall), or roof (up to one-quarter of roof),
- Shaky, broken, or missing steps or railings,
- Numerous missing and cracked window panes,
- Some rotted or loose windows or doors (no longer wind- or water-proof),
- Missing bricks or other masonry of chimney, and
- Makeshift (un-insulated) chimney.

Dilapidated Condition

- Holes, open cracks, or rotted, loose or missing material (siding, shingles, brick, concrete, tiles, plaster, floorboards) over large areas of foundation, on walls or on roof,
- Substantial sagging of roof, floors, or walls,
- Extensive damage by fire, flood or storm, and
- Inadequate original construction such as makeshift walls, roofs made of scrap materials, foundations or floors lacking, or converted barns, sheds, and other structures not adequate for housing.

Figure 1: Study Area Boundaries



SYRACUSE STUDY AREA #1

Study Area #1 Legal Description

The legal description of Study Area #1 consists of approximately 60.36 acres. The legal description was drawn and reviewed by a JEO registered surveyor.

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTIONS 16 AND 21, TOWNSHIP 8 NORTH, RANGE 11 EAST OF THE SIXTH P.M., OTOE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS; BEGINNING AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF WALNUT STREET AND THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 1ST STREET AS PLATTED IN THE CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 6TH STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF PLUM STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 9TH STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF CHESTNUT STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON SAID EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 3RD STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE WESTERLY ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF MIDLAND STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON SAID EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF SAID 1ST STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Figure 2: Study Area #1 Boundary



City of Syracuse

Blight and Substandard Determination Study
Study Area #1
Boundary Map

Created By: C. Wacker
Date: November 2010
Software: ArcGIS 9.3
File: 100882

This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.

JEO
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Contributing Factors

The following factors were evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within Study Area #1. Each contributing factor will be described as follows: no problems, reasonably blight or substandard, or severely blight or substandard. Appendix A shows examples of the various conditions described.

Structural Conditions

JEO completed a structural condition survey on October 21, 2010. A significant number of deteriorating and dilapidated structures were located within the area. In total, 126 permanent structures were evaluated within the boundaries of the study area. Figure 2 displays each structures rating graphically.

Structure Condition Summary

CONDITION	NUMBER OF STRUCTURES	% of TOTAL
NO PROBLEM	43	34%
ADEQUATE	59	47%
DETERIORATING	20	16%
DILAPIDATED	4	3%
TOTAL	126	100.0

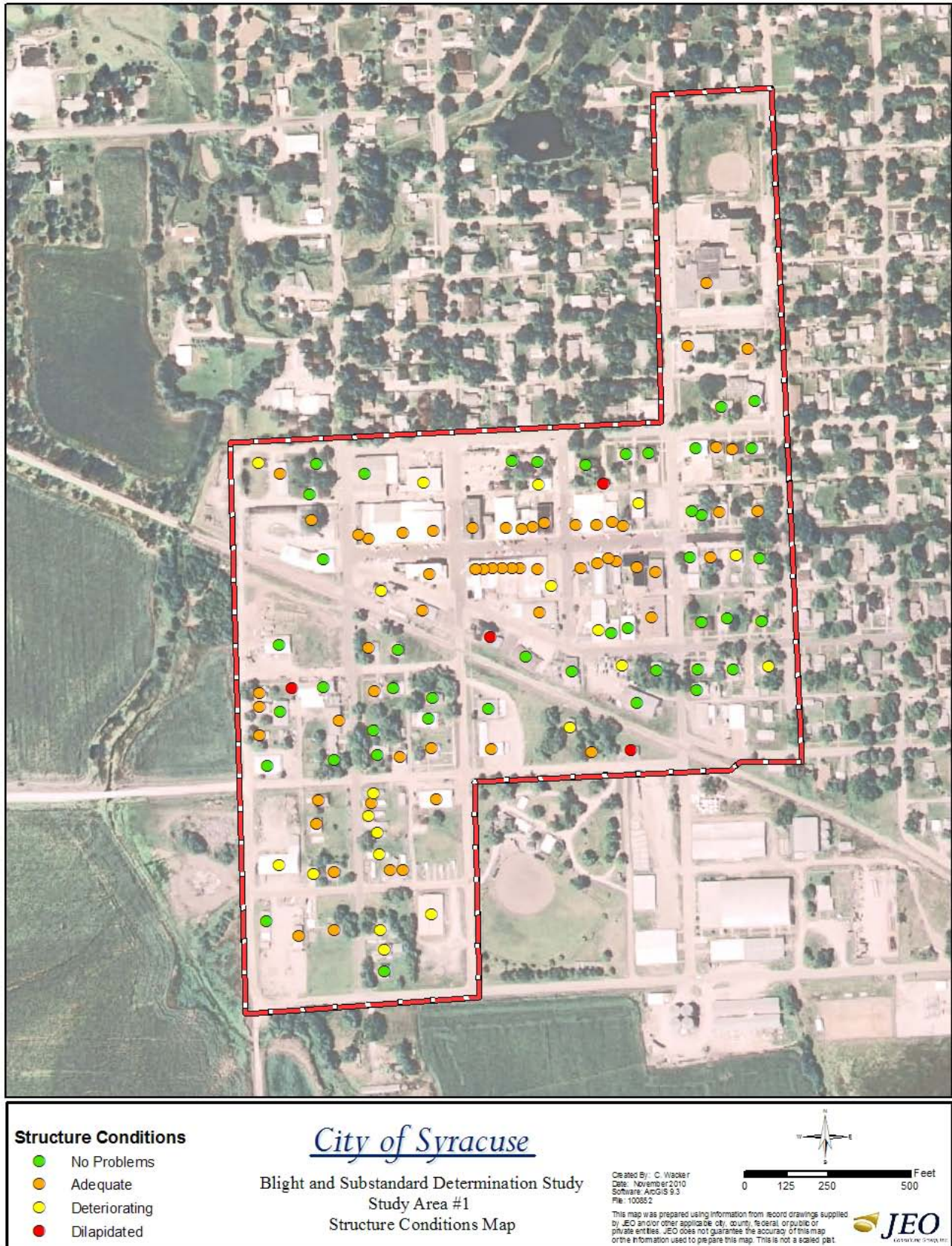
Source: JEO Consulting Group, Inc., October 2010

While only 24 of the 126 structures were rated as either deteriorating or dilapidated, those structures are some of the largest and most visible structures within the central businesses district. The location and visibility of these structures creates a negative image for the entire area therefore it is a reasonably substandard feature.

Structure Age

The structural age within Study Area #1 is another contributing factor. Information regarding the age of the permanent structures within the study area was researched through the county assessors office, and verified during the field survey. While the construction date was not determined for each structure, there is a high level of confidence that the vast majority of the structures are greater than 40 years of age. With a majority of the structures being older than 40 years, the age of the structures as a whole is considered to be a reasonably substandard feature.

Figure 3: Study Area #1 Structure Condition



Infrastructure Analysis

This section looks at the condition of water, sewer, sidewalks, streets, and curb and gutter. These are the main components making up the public infrastructure. The condition of the public infrastructure was rated based upon previous studies, conversations with city staff, and from visual evidence obtained the day of the field evaluation. The rating system uses the following definitions to evaluate infrastructure of the area:

- Good – no visible or known problems,
- Fair – visible cracks or holes that do not create significant problems but should be repaired,
- Poor – visible cracks or holes that may create significant problems and need to be repaired,
- None – the infrastructure is not present in the area.

Sidewalks

Approximately half the study area does not have sidewalks. Of the existing sidewalks those that are the most visible and get the most use in front of the downtown businesses, most are classified as either fair or poor. Between the condition and lack of sidewalks this is a reasonably substandard feature.

Curb and Gutter

With nearly all the curb and gutter lining the downtown businesses rated as fair or poor this is a reasonably substandard feature.

Street Conditions

Street conditions within Study Area #1 were evaluated with regard to ease of travel, and appearance. With all the streets rated as either fair or poor and several at grade railroad crossings within the study area, the condition of the streets a reasonably substandard feature.

Figure 4: Study Area #1 Sidewalk Conditions

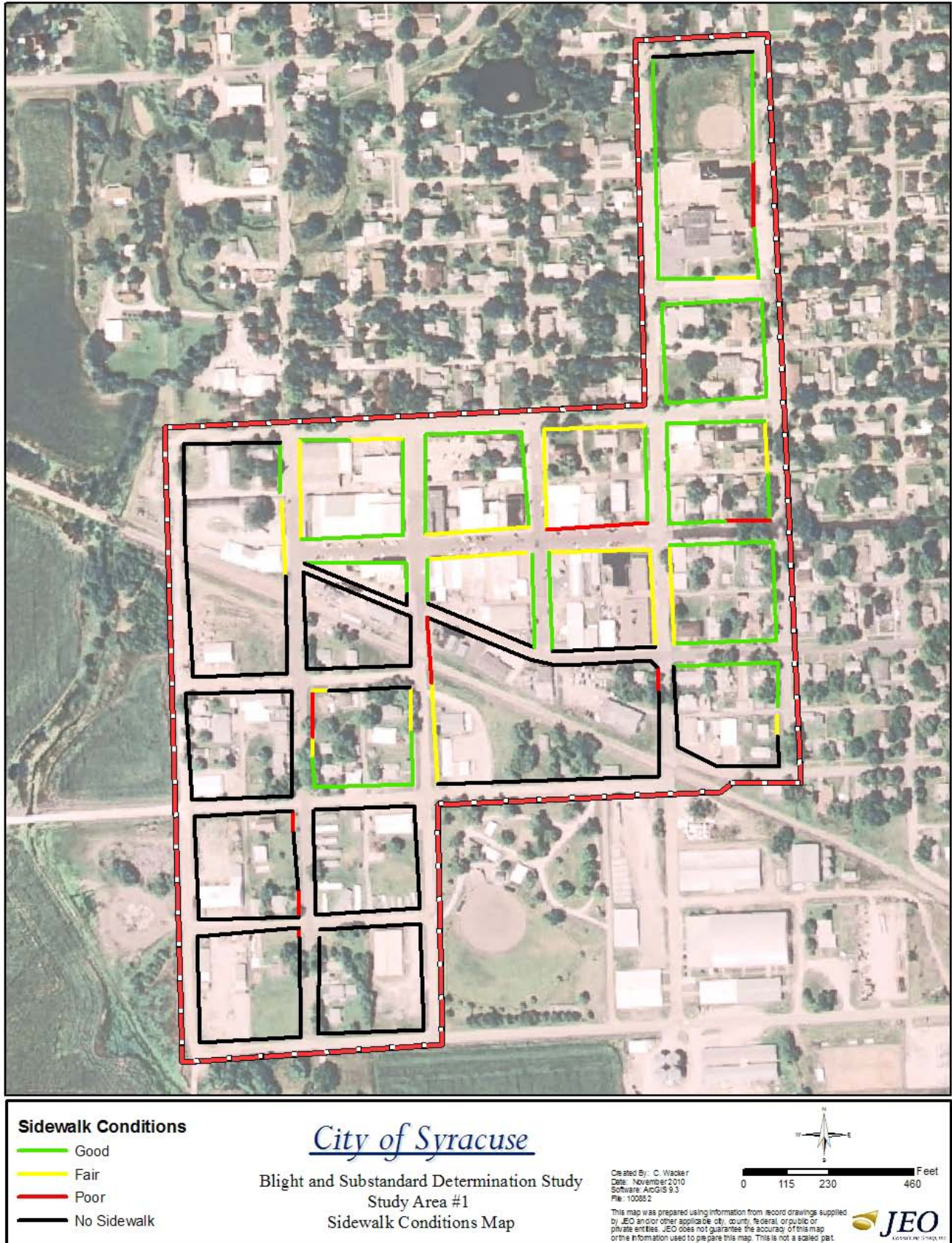


Figure 5: Study Area #1 Curb/Gutter Conditions

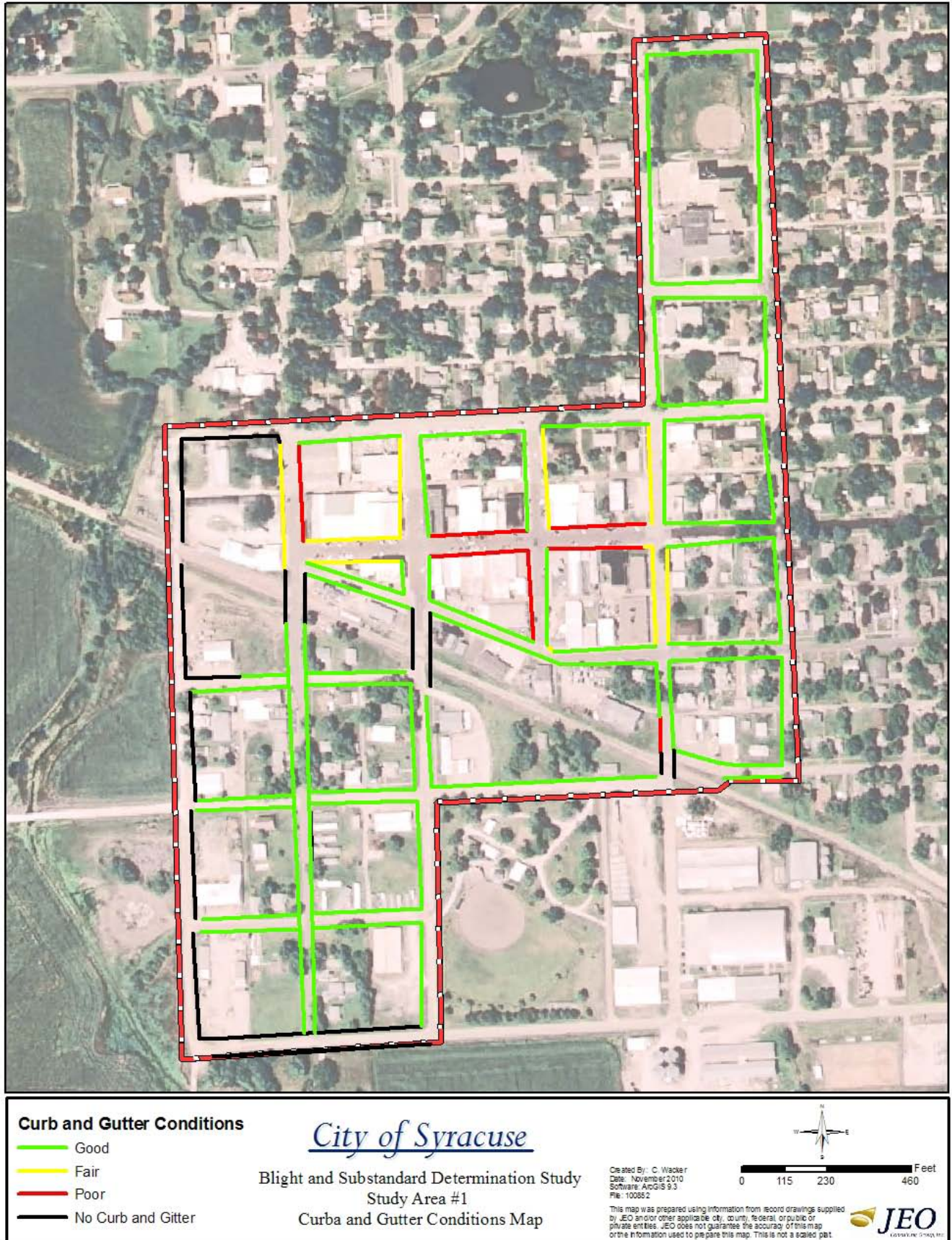


Figure 6: Study Area #1 Street Conditions



<p>Street Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Good— Fair— Poor	<p><i>City of Syracuse</i></p>	
<p>Blight and Substandard Determination Study Study Area #1 Street Conditions Map</p>	<p>Created By: C. Wacker Date: November 2010 Software: ArcGIS 9.3 File: 100852</p>	<p>0 115 230 460 Feet</p>
<p>This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.</p>		

Dangerous Conditions

Issues relating to “dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes” are present throughout Study Area #1. Potential issues contributing to dangerous conditions include presence of debris piles, outdoor storage tanks, and drainage culverts in disrepair. Refer to Appendix A for images of potential fire risk, debris, and junk piles. Presence of debris and junk piles is a provision of inadequate sanitation. These dangerous conditions present a reasonable blight upon the City.

Economic or Social Liability

The existing state of the structures located throughout Study Area #1 creates an economic and social liability for the City. The visual impact of deteriorating structures can hinder the appearance of the community. The City of Syracuse is also experiencing an economic liability due to the lack of economically viable developments within Study Area #1, leading to the presence of blighted conditions.

Findings for Study Area #1

Based on the information collected Study Area #1 has several items contributing to the blighted and substandard conditions. These conditions include:

Blighted Conditions

- Deteriorating structures,
- Unsanitary / unsafe conditions,
- Deterioration of site or other improvements,
- Average age of structures is over 40 years of age, and
- Economic or social liability detrimental to health, safety and welfare.

Substandard Conditions

- Dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence,
- Dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes, and
- Inadequate provisions for ventilation, light, air, open spaces, or sanitation.

Issues listed below are either not present or are limited enough as to have minimal impact on the overall condition of Study Area #1.

The other criteria for blight and substandard conditions which are not present in the area include:

- Improper subdivision or obsolete platting,
- Stable or decreasing population over the last three US censuses,
- Diversity of ownership,
- One-half of unimproved property is over 40 years old,
- High density of population and overcrowding, and
- Tax/special assessment delinquency greater than fair value of land.

Issues which were not researched due to a lack of data include:

- Defective or unusual condition of title,
- Underemployment that equals 120% state or national average, and
- Per capita income less than city wide average.

Conclusion

There are a number of conditions within Study Area #1 that were evaluated during the field analysis which contribute to blighted and substandard conditions. Study Area #1 contains the conditions required to designate the area as blighted and substandard by the City of Syracuse and the Community Development Agency. Therefore, the Consultant has determined that Study Area #1, evaluated herein, meets the necessary requirements to be declared blighted and substandard.

The General Redevelopment Plan, when prepared, shall be developed in a manner consistent with the Syracuse Comprehensive Development Plan. The City of Syracuse should review this Blight and Substandard Study and, if satisfied with the findings contained in the study, may, by resolution, designate Study Area #1 as “Blighted and Substandard” as provided for in the Nebraska Community Law, making this area available for redevelopment activities.

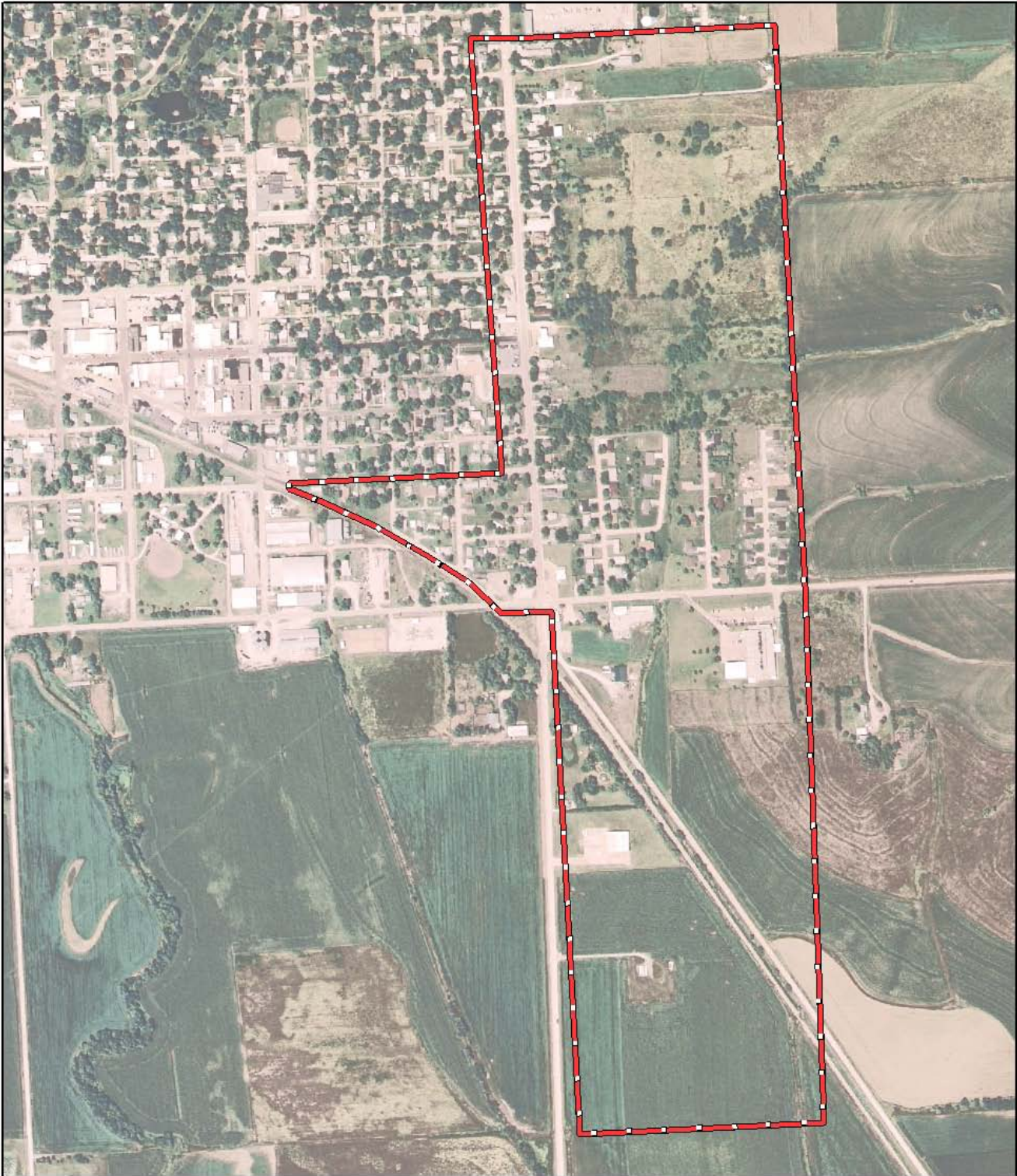
SYRACUSE STUDY AREA #2

Study Area #2 Legal Description

The legal description of Study Area #1 consists of approximately 182.83 acres. The legal description was drawn and reviewed by a JEO registered surveyor.

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTIONS 15, 16 AND 22, TOWNSHIP 8 NORTH, RANGE 11 EAST OF THE SIXTH P.M., OTOE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS; BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 22; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER TO THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 1ST STREET AS PLATTED IN THE CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE WESTERLY ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE EASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN AND SANTA FE RAILROAD; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ON SAID EASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 3RD STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF POPLAR STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF 9TH STREET AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 50; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON SAID EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTH LINE OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 15; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 22; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Figure 7: Study Area #2 Boundary



City of Syracuse

Blight and Substandard Determination Study
Study Area #2
Boundary Map

Created By: C. Wacker
Date: November 2010
Software: ArcGIS 9.3
File: 100662



0 230 460 920 Feet

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Contributing Factors

The following factors were evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within Study Area #2. Each contributing factor will be described as follows: no problems, reasonably blight or substandard, or severely blight or substandard. Appendix B shows examples of the various conditions that led to the blight/substandard determination.

Structural Conditions

JEO completed a structural condition survey on October 21, 2010. A significant number of deteriorating and dilapidated structures were located within the area. In total, 138 permanent structures were evaluated within the boundaries of the study area. Figure 2 displays each structures rating graphically.

Structure Condition Summary

CONDITION	NUMBER OF STRUCTURES	% of TOTAL
NO PROBLEM	120	87%
ADEQUATE	1	1%
DETERIORATING	14	10%
DILAPIDATED	3	2%
TOTAL	138	100.0

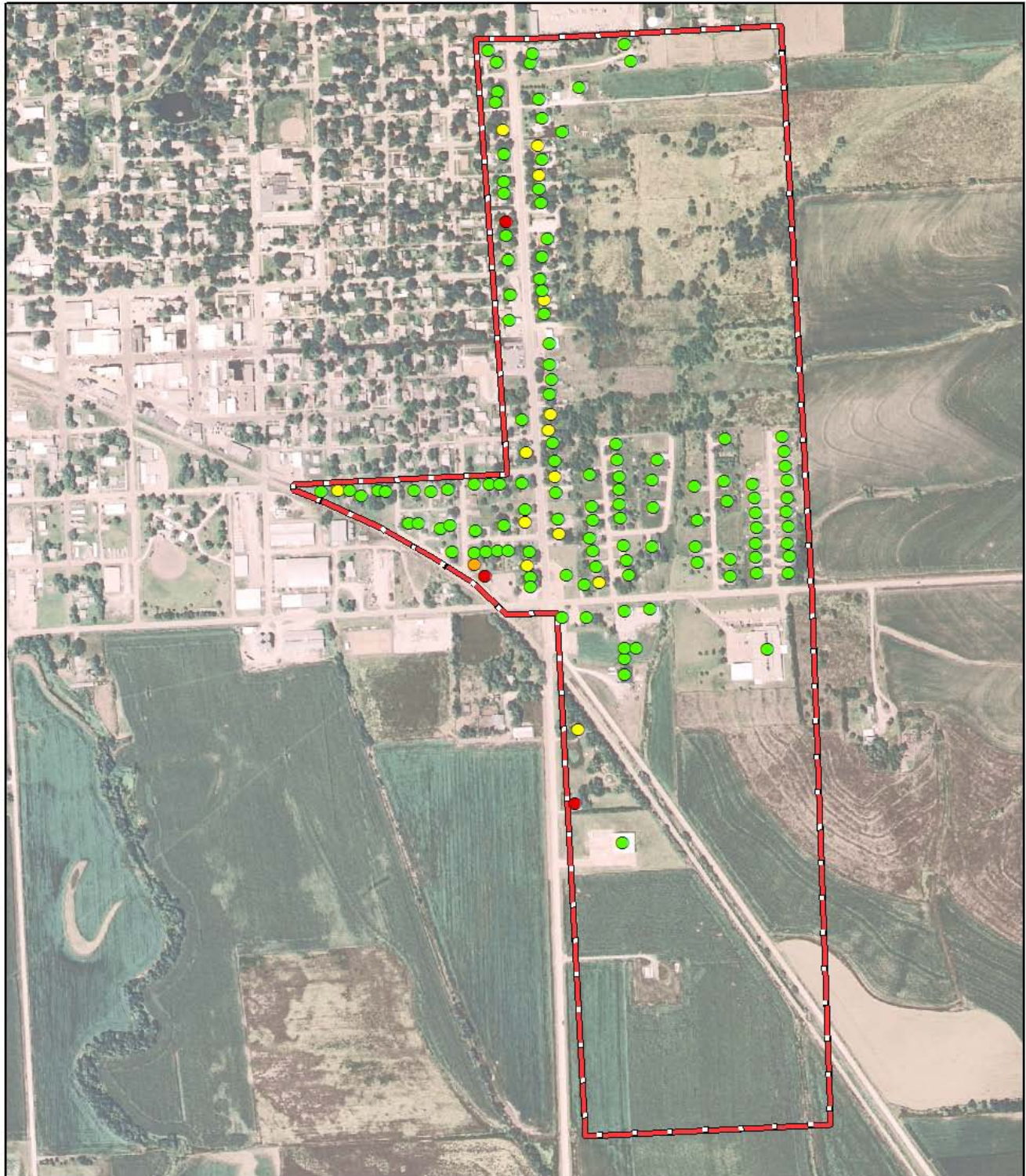
Source: JEO Consulting Group, Inc., June 2010




While the majority of the structures in the study area are not considered deteriorating or dilapidated those that are tend to be located along the highway in the most visible locations of the study area. Therefore these structures present a reasonable presence of blight upon the study area.

Structure Age

The structural age within Study Area #2 is another contributing factor. Information regarding the age of the permanent structures within the study area was researched through the county assessor's office, and verified during the field survey. While the construction date was not determined for each structure, there is a high level of confidence that the average age of the structures is greater than 40 years of age. With a average age of greater than 40 years, the age of the structures as a whole is considered to be a reasonably substandard feature.

Figure 8: Study Area #2 Structure Condition



<p>Structure Condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● No Problems● Adequate● Deteriorating● Dilapidated	<p><i>City of Syracuse</i></p> <p>Blight and Substandard Determination Study Study Area #2 Structure Conditions Map</p>	<p>Created By: C. Wacker Date: November 2010 Software: ArcGIS 9.3 File: 100852</p> <p>This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">  </p>
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Infrastructure Analysis

This section looks at the condition of water, sewer, sidewalks, streets, and curb and gutter. These are the main components making up the public infrastructure. The condition of the public infrastructure was rated based upon previous studies, conversations with city staff, and from visual evidence obtained the day of the field evaluation. The rating system uses the following definitions to evaluate infrastructure of the area:

- Good – no visible or known problems,
- Fair – visible cracks or holes that do not create significant problems but should be repaired,
- Poor – visible cracks or holes that may create significant problems and need to be repaired,
- None – the infrastructure is not present in the area.

Sidewalks

Study Area #2 has very few sidewalks in the study area and the ones that are present are in fair condition. Lacking sidewalks in residential areas and having a majority of the existing sidewalks in fair condition justifies a reasonably substandard rating for this feature.

Street Conditions

Street conditions within Study Area #2 were evaluated with regard to ease of travel, and appearance. The majority of streets are in fair or poor condition and there is an at grade railroad crossing on the highway, these conditions cause this feature to be reasonably substandard.

Figure 9: Study Area #2 Sidewalk Conditions

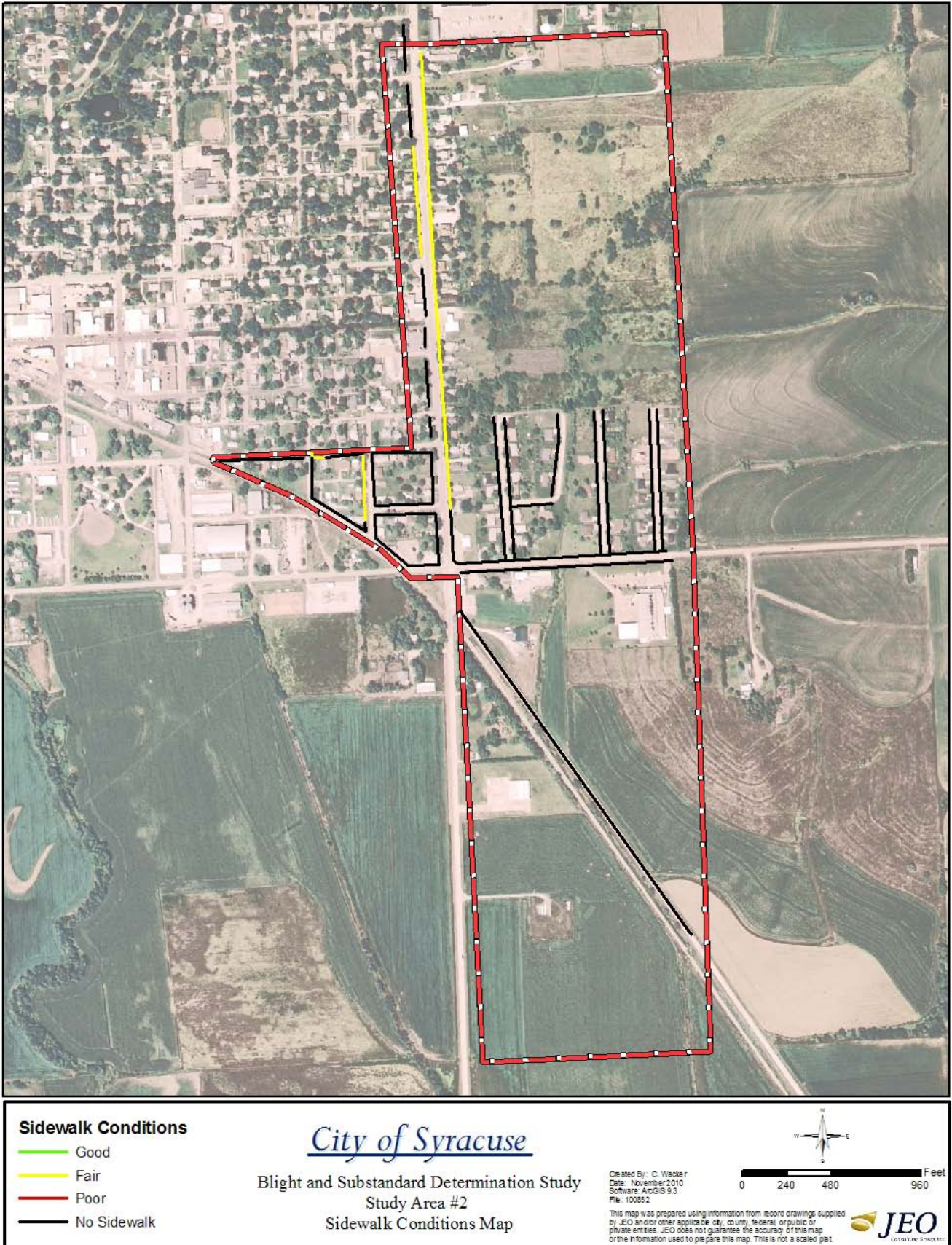
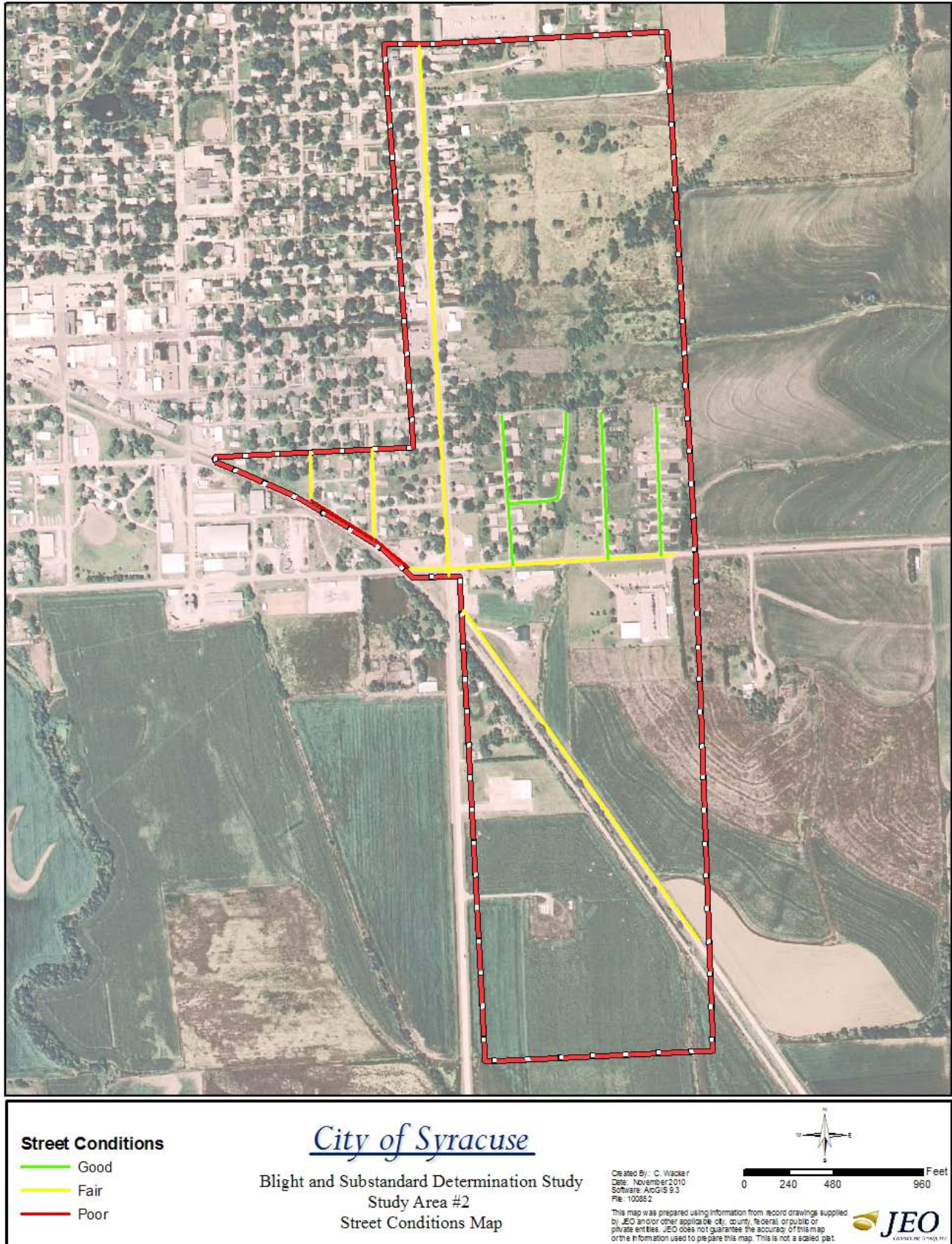


Figure 10: Study Area #2 Street Conditions



Dangerous Conditions

Issues relating to “dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes” are present throughout Study Area #2. Potential issues contributing to dangerous conditions include presence of debris piles, outdoor storage tanks, and drainage culverts in disrepair. Refer to Appendix A for images of potential fire risk, debris, and junk piles. Presence of debris and junk piles is a provision of inadequate sanitation. These dangerous conditions present a reasonable blight upon the City.

Economic or Social Liability

The existing state of the structures located throughout Study Area #2 creates an economic and social liability for the City. The visual impact of deteriorating structures can hinder the appearance of the community. The City of Syracuse is also experiencing an economic liability due to the lack of economically viable developments within Study Area #2, leading to the presence of blighted conditions.

Findings for Study Area #2

Study Area #2 has several items contributing to the blighted and substandard conditions. These conditions include:

Blighted Conditions

- Deteriorating structures,
- Unsanitary / unsafe conditions,
- Deterioration of site or other improvements,
- Average age of structures is over 40 years of age, and
- Economic or social liability detrimental to health, safety and welfare.

Substandard Conditions

- Dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence,
- Dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes, and
- Inadequate provisions for ventilation, light, air, open spaces, or sanitation.

The other criteria for blight and substandard conditions which are not present in the area include:

- Improper subdivision or obsolete platting,
- Stable or decreasing population over the last three US censuses,
- Diversity of ownership,
- One-half of unimproved property is over 40 years old,
- High density of population and overcrowding, and
- Tax/special assessment delinquency greater than fair value of land.

Issues listed below are either not present or are limited enough as to have minimal impact on the overall condition of Study Area #2.

Issues which were not researched due to a lack of data include:

- Defective or unusual condition of title,
- Underemployment that equals 120% state or national average, and
- Per capita income less than city wide average.

Conclusion

There are a number of conditions within Study Area #2 that were evaluated during the field analysis which contribute to blighted and substandard conditions. Study Area #2 contains the conditions required to designate the area as blighted and substandard by the City of Syracuse and the Community Development Agency. Therefore, the Consultant has determined that Study Area #2, evaluated herein, meets the necessary requirements to be declared blighted and substandard.

The General Redevelopment Plan, when prepared, shall be developed in a manner consistent with the Syracuse Comprehensive Development Plan. The City of Syracuse should review this Blight and Substandard Study and, if satisfied with the findings contained in the study, may, by resolution, designate Study Area #2 as “Blighted and Substandard” as provided for in the Nebraska Community Law, making this area available for redevelopment activities.

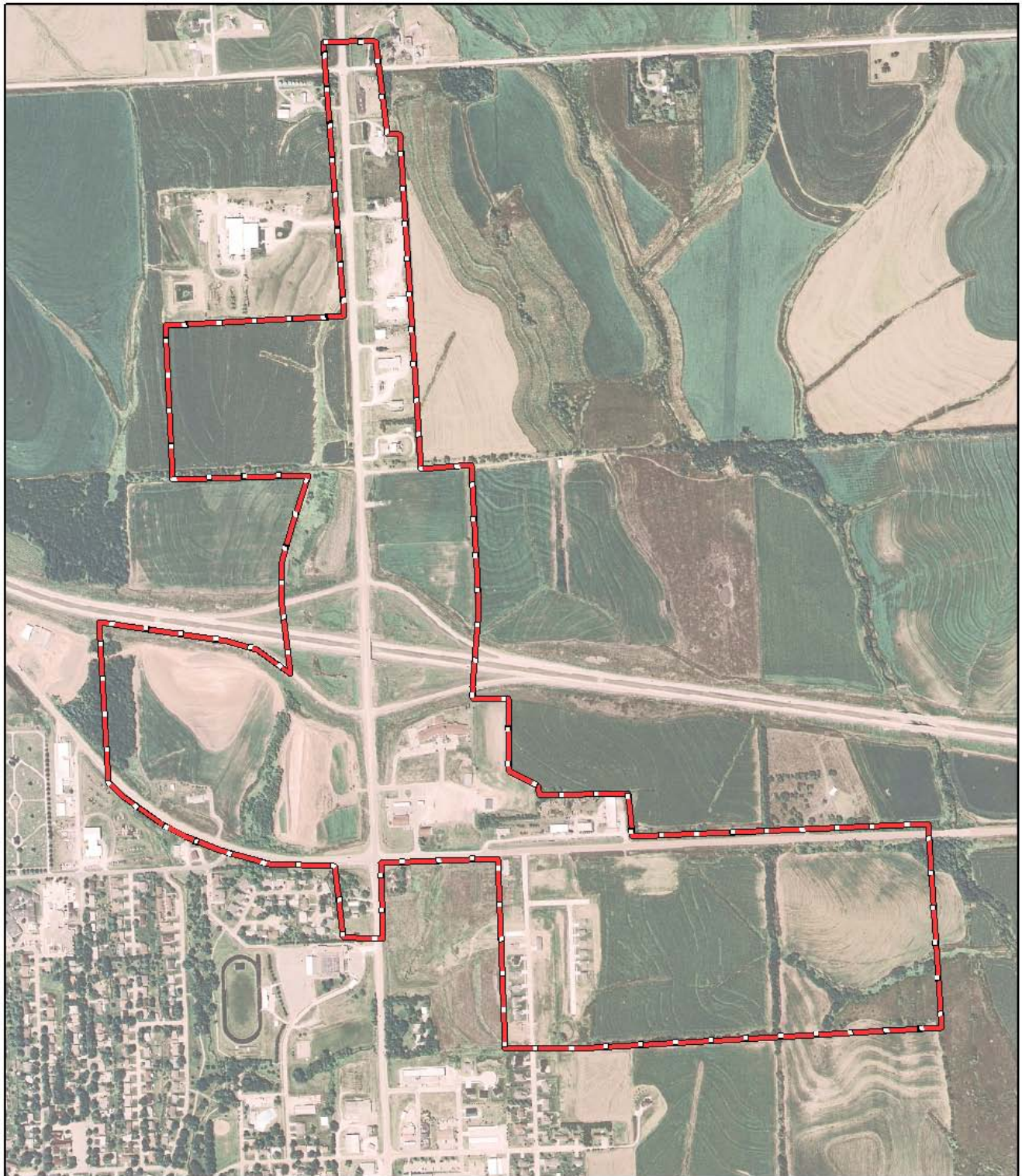
SYRACUSE STUDY AREA #3**Study Area #3 Legal Description**

The legal description of Study Area #1 consists of approximately 277.86 acres. The legal description was drawn and reviewed by a JEO registered surveyor.

A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTIONS 9, 10, 15, AND 16, TOWNSHIP 8 NORTH, RANGE 11 EAST OF THE SIXTH P.M., OTOE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, BEING DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS; BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORHTWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 15; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORHTWEST QUARTER TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 15; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 15 TO THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE EAST LINE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED IN INST. NO. 200503100; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID SOUTHERLY EXTENSION TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID PARCEL; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID EAST LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID PARCEL; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE EAST LINE OF ZAHN 3RD ADDITION AS PLATTED IN THE CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID EAST LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID ZAHN 3RD ADDITION; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID ZAHN 3RD ADDTION TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID ZAHN 3RD ADDITION; THENCE NORTHERLY TO THE INTERSECTION OF THE EAST LINE OF LOT 18, ZAHN SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE AND THE NORTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 2; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID EAST LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID LOT 18; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID LOT 18 TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN DEED BOOK 129, PAGE 134; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN INST. NO. 200500121; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN INST. NO. 200200723; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF HAWKINS-GIGSTAD SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID HAWKINS-GIGSTAD SUBDIVISION TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID HAWKINS-GIGSTAD SUBDIVISION AND THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN DEED BOOK 132, PAGE 297; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID PARCEL; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 50; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE SOUTH LINE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN DEED BOOK 117, PAGE 441; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID SOUTH LINE TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID PARCEL; THENCE NORTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID PARCEL TO THE NORTH LINE OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 10; THENCE WESTERLY ON SAID NORTH LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 9; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID NORTHEAST QUARTER TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF SAID NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 50; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON SAID WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF TRACT 9-C AS SURVEYED BY DAVID L. SCHMITZ ON MAY 20, 2003; THENCE WESTERLY ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID TRACT 9-C TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID TRACT 9-C; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON

THE WEST LINE OF SAID TRACT 9-C TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF DKT INDUSTRIAL PARK SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID DKT INDUSTRIAL PARK SUBDIVISION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID DKT INDUSTRIAL PARK SUBDIVISION; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID DKT INDUSTRIAL PARK SUBDIVISION TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF HANSEN SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID HANSEN SUBDIVISION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID HANSEN SUBDIVISION; THENCE SOUTHERLY TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SYRACUSE BUSINESS CENTER AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE AND THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 2; THENCE WESTERLY ON SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE EAST LINE OF M. PIELOCH SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON SAID EAST LINE TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID M. PIELOCH SUBDIVISION; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF SAID EAST LINE TO THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF OLD NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 2; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SWANSON HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID SWANSON HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID SWANSON HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION AND THE NORTH LINE OF BLOCK 8, FOURTEENTH ADDITION TO SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID NORTH LINE TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 8; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF SAID NORTH LINE TO THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF SAID NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 50; THENCE NORTHERLY ON SAID EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF SAID OLD NEBRASKA HIGHWAY NUMBER 2; THENCE EASTERLY ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF ZCI 1ST ADDITION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID ZCI 1ST ADDITION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID ZCI 1ST ADDITION; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID ZCI 1ST ADDITION TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MEISINGER ADDITION AS PLATTED IN SAID CITY OF SYRACUSE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID MEISINGER ADDITION TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID MEISINGER ADDITION; THENCE EASTERLY ON THE SOUTH LINE OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORHTWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 15 TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Figure 11: Study Area #3 Boundaries



City of Syracuse

Blight and Substandard Determination Study
Study Area #3
Boundary Map



0 325 650 1,300 Feet

Created By: C. Wacker
Date: November 2010
Software: ArcGIS 9.3
File: 100852

This map was prepared using information from record drawings supplied by JEO and/or other applicable city, county, federal, or public or private entities. JEO does not guarantee the accuracy of this map or the information used to prepare this map. This is not a scaled plot.



Contributing Factors

The following factors were evaluated to determine if there is a reasonable presence of blight and substandard conditions within Study Area #3. Each contributing factor will be described as follows: no problems, reasonably blight or substandard, or severely blight or substandard. Appendix C shows examples of the various conditions that led to the determination for each factor.

Infrastructure Analysis

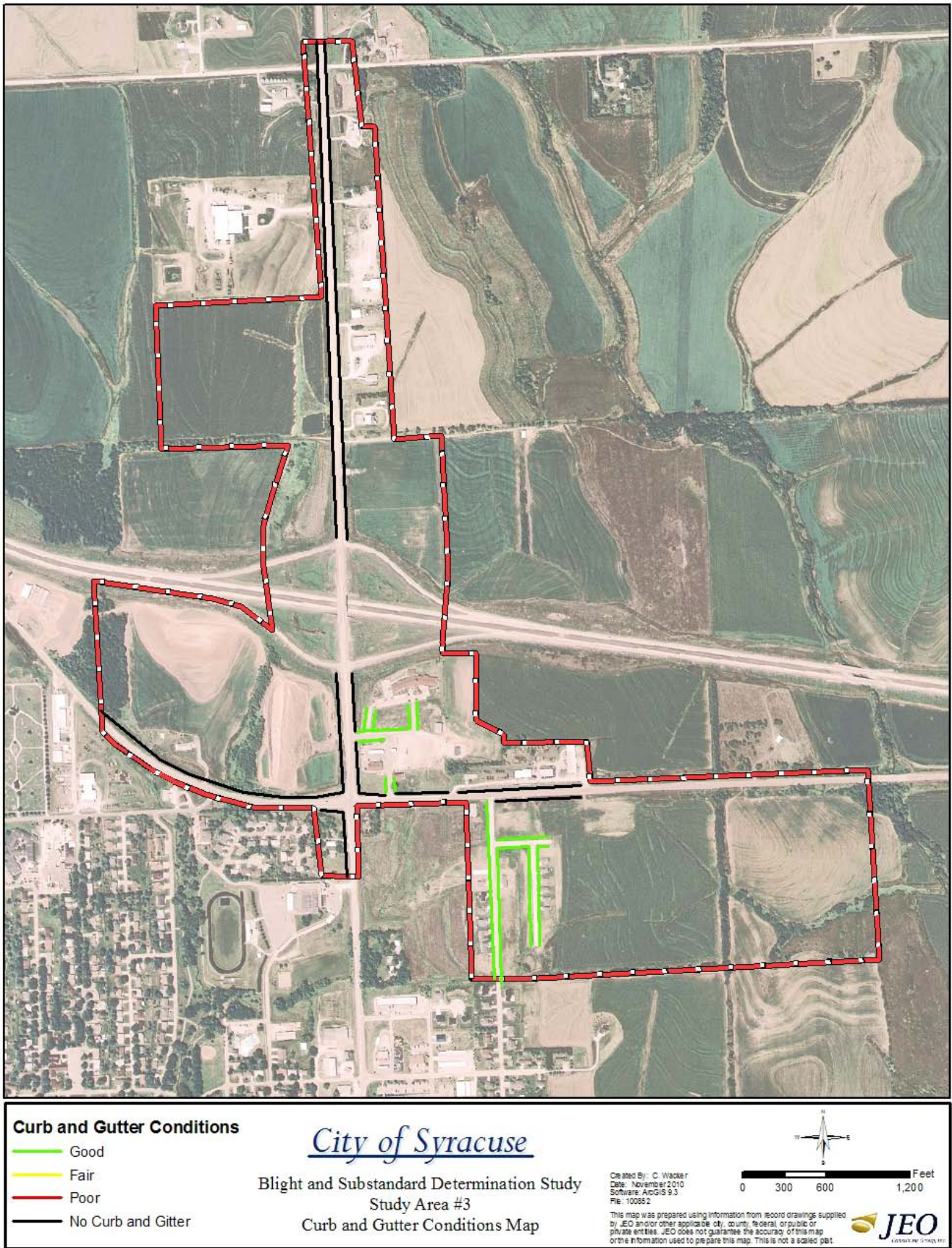
This section looks at the condition of water, sewer, sidewalks, streets, and curb and gutter. These are the main components making up the public infrastructure. The condition of the public infrastructure was rated based upon previous studies, conversations with city staff, and from visual evidence obtained the day of the field evaluation. The rating system uses the following definitions to evaluate infrastructure of the area:

- Good – no visible or known problems,
- Fair – visible cracks or holes that do not create significant problems but should be repaired,
- Poor – visible cracks or holes that may create significant problems and need to be repaired,
- None – the infrastructure is not present in the area.

Curb and Gutter

Curb and Gutter exists in a very limited amount in the small residential portion of the study area. This portion that does exist merely channels the runoff to one creek running through the area. The remainder of the site does not utilize curb and gutter for managing runoff creating open ditches and unmaintained culverts throughout the study area. These characteristics make this a reasonably substandard feature.

Figure 12: Study Area #3 Curb/Gutter Conditions



Water

Without an engineering study, the water system condition is difficult to determine. However, after discussion with municipal staff it was discovered that only approximately half of the study area is currently served by city water. This lack of water service makes development and redevelopment more difficult and costly thus leading to a reasonably substandard feature.

Sanitary Sewer

As with the water system only half the area is serviced by municipal sanitary sewer. Again this lack of service hinders development and redevelopment therefore is a reasonably substandard feature.

Storm Water Management

The majority of the study area utilizes open roadside ditches to convey storm water runoff. When several of these ditches and the necessary culverts are not properly maintained, as has happened here, they present a reasonable presence of blight upon the community. Also in the residential portion of the study area there is an issue with the creek that is used to carry the storm water runoff. That creek, even during a minor rain event, tends to significantly erode away the yards of several neighboring land owners. As the area continues to develop this problem will only get worse as the runoff loads continue to increase. This situation also presents a reasonable blight upon the city.

Dangerous Conditions

Issues relating to “dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes” are present particularly north of Highway 2 in Study Area #3. Potential issues contributing to dangerous conditions include presence of debris piles, outdoor storage tanks, and drainage culverts in disrepair. Refer to Appendix C for images of potential fire risk, debris, and junk piles. Presence of debris and junk piles is a provision of inadequate sanitation. These dangerous conditions present a reasonable blight upon the City.

Findings for Study Area #3

Study Area #3 has several items contributing to the blighted and substandard conditions. These conditions include:

Blighted Conditions

- Unsanitary / unsafe conditions,
- Deterioration of site or other improvements,
- Economic or social liability detrimental to health, safety and welfare.

Substandard Conditions

- Dangerous conditions to life or property due to fire or other causes, and
- Inadequate provisions for ventilation, light, air, open spaces, or sanitation.

The other criteria for blight and substandard conditions which are not present in the area include:

- Substantial number of deteriorating structures,
- Average age of structures is over 40 years of age, and
- Dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence,
- Improper subdivision or obsolete platting,
- Stable or decreasing population over the last three US censuses,
- Diversity of ownership,
- One-half of unimproved property is over 40 years old,
- High density of population and overcrowding, and
- Tax/special assessment delinquency greater than fair value of land.

Issues listed below are either not present or are limited enough as to have minimal impact on the overall condition of Study Area #3.

Issues which were not researched due to a lack of data include:

- Defective or unusual condition of title,
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- Per capita income less than city wide average.

Conclusion

There are several conditions within Study Area #3 that were evaluated during the field analysis which contribute to blighted and substandard conditions. Study Area #3 contains the conditions required to designate the area as blighted and substandard by the City of Syracuse and the Community Development Agency. Therefore, the Consultant has determined that Study Area #3, evaluated herein, meets the necessary requirements to be declared blighted and substandard.

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APPENDIX A –STUDY AREA #1 EXAMPLES OF BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS



APPENDIX B – STUDY AREA #2 EXAMPLES OF BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS



APPENDIX C – STUDY AREA #3 EXAMPLES OF BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD CONDITIONS

