

Coffee County: Oak Park Community

Quality Growth Resource Team Recommendations

Immediate Actions

The following actions would begin immediate turn-around of the neighborhood:

- Code enforcement – use fines and condemnation powers as necessary. Hold property owners responsible for bringing properties up to code compliance.
- Begin neighborhood clean-up efforts – contact Keep Georgia Beautiful for ideas and advice.
- Re-establish sheriff's substation with 24 hour staffing.
- Involve community residents in identifying neighborhood needs and refining the *long range development plan* (below).
- Continue meetings of stakeholders (the group that met with the resource team plus community residents/leaders) to discuss community issues and guide implementation of the long-range development plan (below). This "Friends of Oak Park" group should include:
 1. Churches
 2. Medical Community
 3. Residents
 4. Public Agencies
 5. Private Supporters
 6. Non-Profits
 7. Civic Associations
- Continue the Hope Center efforts, plus add the following enhancements:
 1. Extend public health facilities
 2. Add public transit pick-up location
 3. Have a DFACs case worker on site
 4. Start a mentor program for youth
 5. Add a bilingual staff member
 6. Local Crisis "Hot Line" – with Call Box located at the Center
 7. Hold special events to raise community awareness
- Offer classes to community residents (perhaps through Hope Center):
 1. Basic Home Economics 101
 2. Tenants Rights
 3. Empower the Tenants
 4. Financial Literacy
- Establish the following organizations in the neighborhood:
 1. Tenant association
 2. Neighborhood Watch program
 3. Boys and Girls Clubs
 4. Inter-racial Ministerial Association
 5. Oak Park Ambassadors
 6. A "phone tree" to spread the word in the community about events and programs

- Involve the local media in building awareness throughout Coffee County of the problems in Oak Park, through human interest stories, etc.

Long-Range Development Plan

A detailed plan for redevelopment of Oak Park should be prepared, consistent with the attached concept (see illustration 1).

- The Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law should be utilized to implement this plan (see Attachment A for a summary of this law).
- Involve community residents and stakeholder group in developing the plan for the community.
- The plan should provide for phased upgrade of the community (neighborhood-by-neighborhood) over the next generation.
- The plan should carefully identify environmentally sensitive areas (floodplains, wetlands, poor soils, etc.) where new housing or other structures will not be located as the community redevelops. These environmentally sensitive areas might best be set aside as passive parks for the enjoyment of community residents.
- Paved roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, and electricity should be provided throughout the community.
- Funding sources:
 1. To prepare the plan – Local Development Fund or Quality Growth Grant Program
 2. To implement the plan – CDBG & local sources

Neighborhood Service Center

The *long range development plan* should include first-phase development of a Neighborhood Service Center. This center would include several buildings and would be built around the existing Hope Center, which is within convenient walking distance of all parts of Oak Park. The following businesses, services, or activities should be housed at the center to meet the daily needs of community residents:

- Grocery store
- Health Department (including mental health & DFACS)
- Sheriff's Department substation
- Teaching facilities:
 1. GED training
 2. Basic computer
 3. Literacy training
 4. English as second language
- Laundromat
- Recreational activity center
- Small business office space
- Transit pick-up location

Housing Programs

The following housing programs and resources could be used to bring about the housing improvements called for in the *long range development plan*:

- Relocation during redevelopment:
 1. Identify comparable rental units within Coffee County and/or low to moderate income housing opportunities.
 2. Start renovation and/or rehabilitation in phases based upon availability of rental and/or housing availability.
 3. Work with residents on rental and homeownership interests:
 - a) Involvement of local financial organizations through Federal Home Loan Bank (membership required)
 - b) City partnerships with non-profit organizations to do homebuyer education (English and Spanish)
 - c) Creation of City loan programs through CDBG (ie. First Time Homebuyer, Rental rehabilitation program)
- Home buyer education counseling (English and Spanish)
- Renovation programs:
 1. Rebuilding Together
 2. USDA/RD restoration loans and grants to elderly households
 3. Community Home Investment Program (CHIP)
- Home ownership:
 1. USDA/RD Direct and Guaranteed Loan programs
 2. Habitat for Humanity
 3. Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB)
 4. DCA Home Buyer Mortgages & OwnHOME down payment loans
- Rental housing:
 1. DCA Rural Rental Housing Development Fund
 2. USDA/RD rural rental
 - a) Direct and Guaranteed Loans
 - b) Farm Labor Housing
 3. HOME CHCO Predevelopment Loan Program (DCA)

Manufactured Housing Concept

To guarantee a true “neighborhood” appearance for the revitalized Oak Park, the following cosmetic improvements and design standards should be required of new manufactured housing locating in the community (see illustration 2):

- Require roofs with pitches of 7 or 9 to 12 slope
- Roof must be tin or vinyl shingle
- Require front porches or side wrap-around porches
- Siding must be vinyl, clapboard, or shingle-look
- Encourage modular fireplaces attached to each home
- Foundations should be cinder block or have a stucco appearance
- Encourage a variety of roof pitches, porch styles, and home sizes on each block
- Allow small private yards with landscaping or shared green space on the interior of the larger blocks
- Front yards should not be fenced

Ordinances & Infrastructure

The following additional actions are necessary for effective implementation of the *long range development plan*:

- Exercise revised public nuisance ordinance as permitted by O.C.G.A. 41-2-7 (see Attachment B for model code section).
- Rezone all interior parcels in Oak Park as Medium Density Planned Unit Development (see Attachment B for model code section). Commercial and multifamily development, as well as manufactured housing (including double-wides) can be allowed in this category.
- Rezone perimeter parcels to R-1, which does not allow mobile homes.
- Adopt design review guidelines for Oak Park as a Redevelopment Specific Master Plan (see Attachment B for model code section).
- Revise subdivision regulations to enhance road specifications (see Attachment B for model code section).
- Place sewer lines along planned routes for water lines and designate location for a solid waste treatment facility.

Illustration 1: Long Range Development Concept



OAK PARK REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Illustration 2: Manufactured Housing Concept

