



A Public Hearing on Neighborhood Blight and Revitalization
April 29, 2015



Bill McGowen, Executive Director
Redevelopment Authority of the County of Washington (RACW)



RACW BLIGHT RELATED GOALS

- Collaborate with municipal officials and key stakeholders to undertake activities to redevelop economically or environmentally challenged properties
- Implement programs to upgrade the existing housing stock and create additional affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income households
- Collaborate with local governing bodies to promote multi-municipal planning and to plan and implement infrastructure and demolition projects in order to revitalize residential neighborhoods and commercial districts



RACW Blight Related Programs

- **Home Improvements**
 - **Home Rehabilitation Program**
 - **Access Program**
 - **Homebuyer Assistance Program**
- **Elderly Housing Development and Management**
- **Community Development Block Grant Program**
 - **Code Enforcement Demolition**
 - **Downtown Revitalization**
- **Brownfield Redevelopment**
 - **EPA Assessment Program**
 - **EPA Revolving Loan Program**





Current Funding Sources

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) – **Reduced by 40% over the last five years**
- Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) – **Reduced by 50% over the last five years**
- Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement Fund (PHARE)
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Act 137 – Recording Fees
- Local Share Account (LSA) - Gaming
- EPA Assessment Grants
- EPA Revolving Loan Fund





Home Improvements

FY 2014 Budget - \$1.3 mil

Programs

- **Home Rehabilitation**
\$985k (CDBG, HOME, LSA)
- **Access Program**
\$146k (DCED & Act 137)
- **Homebuyer Assistance Program**
\$245k (HOME)



Home Rehabilitation Program

- **Established in 1977**
- **Benefits Low and Moderate Income Homeowners**
- **Improves Existing Housing Stock**
- **Increases Energy Efficiency**
- **Eliminates Code Deficiencies**
- **Reduces Lead Hazards**
- **Corrects Incipient Violations**
- **Over 2,300 Homeowners Assisted**





Access Program

- **Established in 2005**
- **Benefits Low and Moderate Income Families**
- **Permanently Disabled Residents**
- **Increased Accessibility**
- **Modifications that Contribute to Independent Living**





Countywide Homebuyer Assistance Program

- Established in 2000
- Benefits Low and Moderate Income Families
- Purchase of Existing Home by a First Time Homebuyer
- **86 Families Assisted in Purchase and Renovation**





Highland Ridge Project



- **Building 25 New Homes**
 - City of Washington
 - 52 Parcels Acquired
 - 22 Blighted Structures Demolished
 - **14 New Homes Constructed**





RACW Elderly Housing

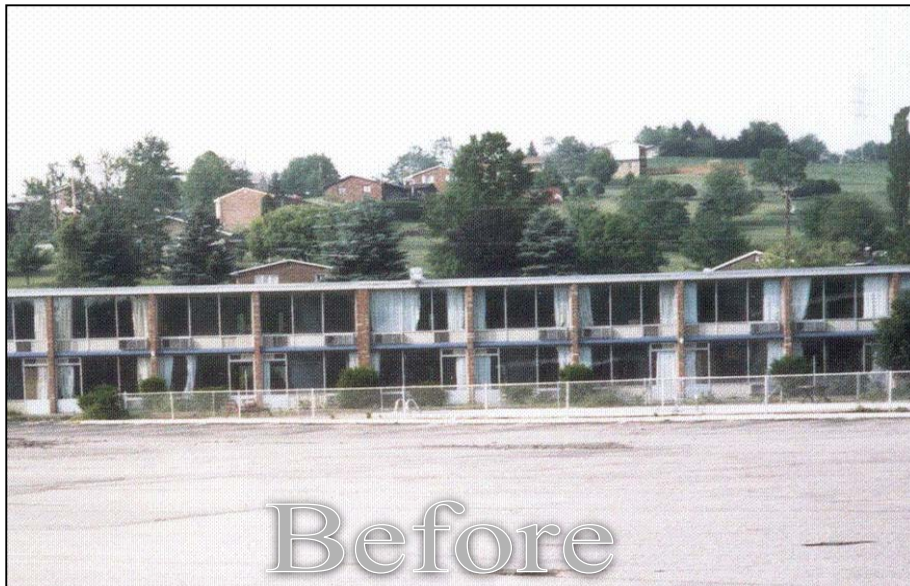
- **8 Facilities Developed, Owned and Managed**
- **523 Total Units**
- **\$4 mil Annual Budget**
- **Annual Real Estate Taxes - \$400k**
- **19 Employees**
- **\$29 mil in Development**





Century Plaza Apartments

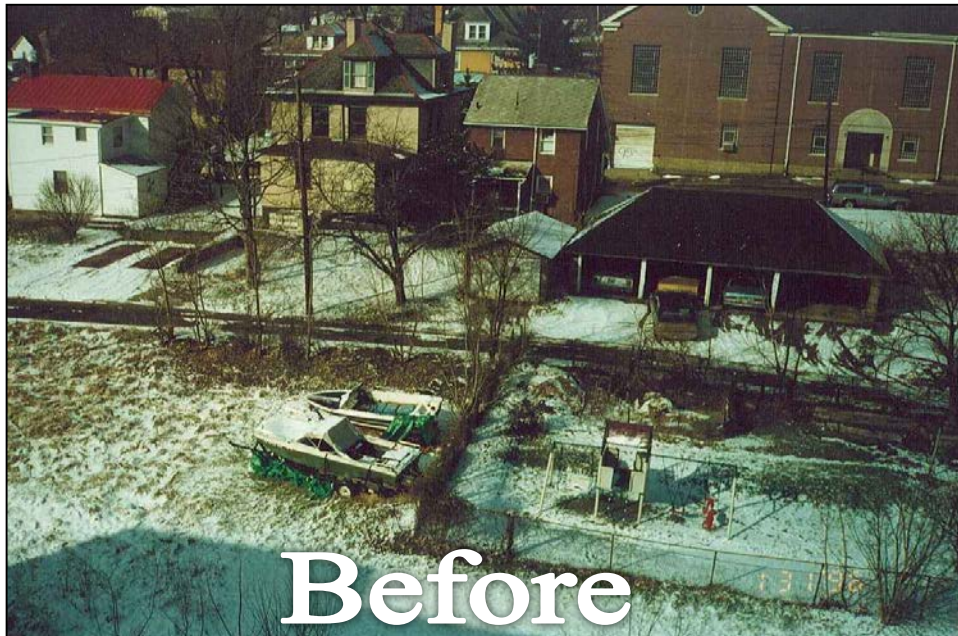
- **North Franklin Township**
- **Building Opened in 1994**
- **Former Site Use – Dilapidated Vacant Motel**
 - **Purchased Out of Federal Bankruptcy Court**
- **Project Cost - \$6.6 mil**
- **79 Units**





Canon Apartments

- **Canonsburg Borough**
- **Building Opened in 1998**
- **Former Site Use – Blighted Area**
- **Project Cost – \$4.5 mil**
- **42 Units**





Claysville Apartments

- **Claysville Borough**
- **Building Opened in 2007**
- **Former Site Use – Blighted Area**
- **Project Cost – \$4.9 mil**
- **24 Units**





John Lignelli Manor

- **New Eagle Borough**
- **Building Opened in 2002**
- **Former Site Use – Vacant Mon Valley Hospital**
- **Developed by RACW**
- **Managed by the Washington County Housing Authority**
- **Project Cost – \$4.1 mil**
- **42 Units**





NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM

- Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008
- Purchase and redevelopment of vacant foreclosed homes
- \$2.7 mil invested (\$1.5 mil grant, \$1.2 mil sales proceeds)
- Developers – Threshold Housing Development & Mon Valley Initiative
- **Purchase and rehab of 21 Properties** – sold to eligible buyers
- Targeted areas in City of Washington and Charleroi Borough





SUMMERLEA AVENUE DEVELOPMENT

- City of Washington
- Per RACW request, 7 dilapidated houses donated by Slovenian Savings and Loan
- CDBG funds used for environmental clean up and demolition
- Lots transferred to Threshold Housing Development for development
- HOME funds for construction – two new single family homes
- Downpayment assistance loans provided to two eligible buyers in 2014





CODE ENFORCEMENT DEMOLITION

- **Blight Removal – National HUD Objective**
- **343 blighted structures demolished Countywide since 2005**
- **\$3.4 mil in CDBG funds utilized since 2005**
- **\$262k in CDBG allocated for demolition – FY 2015**





CODE ENFORCEMENT DEMOLITION

- Municipality establishes demolition as priority
- Building Code Ordinance in place
- Blighted properties identified and cited by municipality
- Condemnation occurs if property is not brought up to code
- Properties released to RACW for demolition
- **Demolition is last resort**





DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

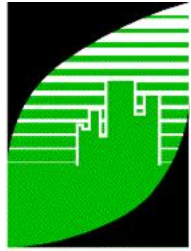
City of Washington Central Business District Revitalization Project

- Completed in 2005
- **\$13 mil invested**
- 14 block streetscape project
- Scope included relocating utilities underground, new sidewalks, street paving, lighting, decorative benches, planters and trash receptacles

Other municipalities in the County which have undertaken Downtown Revitalization Projects

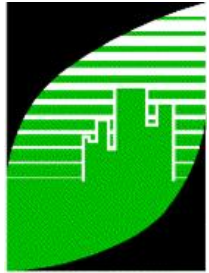
- Donora
- California
- Canonsburg
- Charleroi
- Monongahela





Brownfield Redevelopment

- ✦ **Detroit Street Business Park - City of Washington – 11 Acres**
- ✦ **Fort Pitt Business Park – Canonsburg Borough – 23 Acres**
- ✦ **Donora Industrial Park – Donora Borough – 11 Acres**
- ✦ **Phoenix Business Park – Union Township – 141 Acres**
- ✦ **Centerville Clinic – City of Washington**
- ✦ **Canton 2010 Master Plan – 400+ Acres**
- ✦ **Former YWCA / New TRIPIL Headquarters – City of Washington**
- ✦ **Former Tri-State Oil – Hanover Township**
- ✦ **Brockway Glass Site – Canton Township – 22 Acres**
- ✦ **Allenport Mill Site – Mon Valley – 400 Acres**
- ✦ **Former YMCA Site/Crossroads Center – City of Washington**



Brownfield Assessment Program

- Inventory of Contaminated Properties (140 Sites)
- Properties Selected for Environmental Site Assessments (ESA)
- Phase 1 & Phase 2 ESA (21 Sites)





Brownfield Loan Fund

REVOLUTION
COMMUNITY

- EPA \$1 mil Grant - Capitalize RLF
- Loans Provided for Cleanup Activities
- Grant/Loan Combination - Municipalities & Nonprofits



Conclusions

- **Federal, State, and Local Programs exist to address “Neighborhood Blight and Revitalization”**
- **Washington County effectively administers these programs**
 - **Only limited by funding**





Recommendations

- **Restore Federal CDBG and HOME Allocations**
- **Restore Funding for State Programs to Address Blight**
- **State Funding for Land Banks**

