

## **Dayton Gets Real: City grant used to move Dayton neighborhood forward**



**DGR: Westwood Neighborhood**

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By WHIO Staff

DAYTON — The city of Dayton is looking to spend more than \$60,000 revitalizing a west Dayton neighborhood.

News Center 7 talked to city planners and Westwood neighborhood residents about what they hope this latest investment will do to stabilize and bring more opportunity to the area.

**>> 'It's utterly ridiculous;' Neighbors say city is slow to remove abandoned, vacant buildings**

The city said the grant money will help fund a future housing and economic development plan for the Westwood neighborhood, which is a spot the city said is well worth the investment.

“It is new to the neighborhood. It’s something the residents and stakeholders brought to us as something they want,” said Tony Kroeger, who is the city’s Planning Commission Manager.

The Westwood neighborhood is one of the city’s largest with it being twelfth in size and seventh in population. The study will be more about housing economics than any other area, and it’s long overdue.

“A neighborhood plan, specifically for Westwood hasn’t been done in my time here, that’s about 15 years,” Kroeger said.

City leaders said the \$62,000 grant will allow planning for the sprawling neighborhood that is bounded by West Third Street, Gettysburg Avenue, James H. McGee and Wolf Creek.

Residents said they are optimistic about the potential plan.

“Mind-boggling how much money they spend and then it doesn’t go where it is supposed to go,” said Long.

City leaders said the money will pay to hire a consultant that will hold community meetings to develop community priorities and a plan to reach them. Work has already been done to stop blighted and hazardous conditions here.

“The neighborhoods been through a lot of change. It’s not as dense as it used to be. There’s been a good amount of demolition done there,” said Kroeger.

City planners said there’s more to be done but they’ve spent as much nuisance abatement money here as in any other city neighborhood. Taking a drive down the street shows some of the empty lots, plus a combination of new housing and older housing, some of which might need to be torn down.

“It could be a roomier, cleaner, greener neighborhood if done right,” Kroeger said.

Most of the study will concentrate on housing since the neighborhood is almost all single-family homes and heavily residential. People living in the neighborhood said they’d still like some attention to potential retail opportunities as well.

“We need stores, we need grocery stores, we need places where you can spend your money without going 15 to 20 miles,” Long said.

There’s already been a concentrated effort to replace older housing with newer homes and bring the neighborhood back up to par. Residents hope the new study is more than words on paper and will move the community forward.

Dayton Mayor Jeffrey Mims said that he is happy that the federal government and the Biden administration have made grants like this possible.

Mims said the grant will be used to help set priorities on what needs to be done in the

City leaders said it estimates that to hire a consultant, hold community meetings and come up with plans and priorities will take about a year.

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