



22 West Wood Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Youngstown, Ohio 44503  
Phone: 330-743-1196, Fax: 330-743-1322  
or  
108 Main Avenue S.W., Suite 1005  
Warren, OH 44481  
Phone: 330-394-3801, Fax: 330-394-5601

---

## Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation

### What is a Community Development Corporation?

A Community Development Corporation (CDC) is a not-for-profit organization incorporated to provide programs, offer services and engage in other activities that promote and support a community. Community Development Corporations typically serve a geographic location such as a neighborhood or a city. They can be involved in a variety of activities including economic development, foreclosure prevention, housing rehabilitation and development, community greening, neighborhood marketing and community building.

### Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation Background

The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC) is being developed to undertake strategic neighborhood development and revitalization activities in targeted areas throughout the city. Historically, Youngstown has had limited community development capacity and currently there is no functioning CDC that is able to work comprehensively on a targeted citywide scale. The YNDC is being developed to fill the existing void and to provide the community with a high capacity and multifaceted organization staffed by talented and experienced professionals capable of achieving the needed results.

### Mission Statement

The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation is committed to improving the quality of life in Youngstown by building and encouraging investment in neighborhoods of choice for all.

### Initial Work of the YNDC

Initially, the YNDC will target its work in a handful of neighborhoods based on objective neighborhood selection criteria and alignment with existing neighborhood revitalization efforts. Preserving the viability and facilitating market recovery in the stable and transitional neighborhoods the city has left will be the focus of initial targeting strategy. Targeting strategies have been effective in cities throughout the country including the Neighborhoods in Bloom program in Richmond, Virginia and the Strategic Investment Initiative in Cleveland, Ohio. The YNDC will utilize a broad palette of programs, focused on neighborhood recovery from housing rehab, homebuyer assistance, home maintenance assistance, vacant lot management and greening, neighborhood marketing and engagement, to begin the process of neighborhood stabilization and recovery. These market recovery tactics will be used in tandem with the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative's (MVOC) ability to strengthen and reknit the social fabric and capacity of the target neighborhoods. The MVOC will also work hand in hand with the YNDC to effectively lobby for sufficient resources to undertake these strategic and innovative community development activities. The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation is intended to be a "sister project" to the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative. The two organizations will work together to rebuild the social and physical fabric of neighborhoods across the City of Youngstown. The two organizations will also work in close partnership with existing organizations such as the City of Youngstown and other groups involved in urban revitalization activities.

### Housing Related Programming

The YNDC will offer a wide range of housing related programming. The menu of housing related programs may include the following:

1. **Rehabilitation of existing housing** – Existing homes may be rehabbed in targeted neighborhoods and resold to homeowners. The rehabilitated structures will be green and energy efficient. This type of intervention is

critical in neighborhoods with markets in transition. The work of the YNDC will be capable of restoring stability within these markets.

2. **Rehabilitation and management of rental units** – Existing homes may be rehabilitated for residents at or below 50 percent of the area median income. These units will be managed by the YNDC and linked to other programming for occupants (ie: job training, homebuyer education, etc.). The rehabilitated rental units may be green and energy efficient minimizing utility costs for occupants. The units may also be integrated into diverse and healthy neighborhoods rather than further concentrating poverty in Youngstown’s poorest neighborhoods.
3. **Homebuyer Education and Downpayment Assistance** – The YNDC may partner with Buy Into Youngstown and the Urban Homeownership Incentive Program to provide homebuyer education and downpayment assistance of up to \$10,000 to potential homeowners. This program may be utilized to educate and assist potential homeowners of rehabbed housing.
4. **Foreclosure Prevention** – The YNDC may partner with Empowering and Strengthening Ohio’s People and the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative to reach out to residents feeling the pressure of foreclosure. ESOP’s nationally recognized program will be integrated into YNDC activities to keep people in their homes and neighborhoods intact. These programs may play a key role in solidifying the future of Youngstown’s stable neighborhoods feeling the pressure of foreclosure.
5. **Home Maintenance Assistance** – The YNDC may provide assistance within targeted neighborhoods to existing homeowners unable to sufficiently maintain their properties. This program may provide paint, building materials and other assistance to existing homeowners.
6. **Neighborhood Marketing** – The YNDC may develop a comprehensive and effective marketing strategy for housing and investment opportunities located within targeted neighborhoods.
7. **Home Deconstruction** – The YNDC may facilitate pilot deconstruction projects on abandoned properties throughout the city. Deconstruction can provide an opportunity to train residents and youth carpentry and other trade skills and may present opportunities to partner with existing job training programs (YouthBuild). Deconstruction keeps thousands of tons of reusable materials from the landfill each year and provides materials for residents to maintain their homes.

### **Community Greening Programming**

The YNDC will offer a wide range of greening programming. The menu of greening programs may include the following:

1. **Vacant Lot Management** – There are over 22,000 vacant lots within the City of Youngstown, which translates into 36.4 percent of all parcels within the city being vacant land. This statistic creates a significant need for management of vacant lots. The YNDC may develop vacant lot management programs capable of maintained lots and creating a feeling of ownership. These programs will be based on the nationally recognized Philadelphia Green program. Given the scale of the vacant lot challenge within the city, pilot programs will be developed within targeted neighborhoods.
2. **Community Gardens** – The YNDC may assist existing organizations (GROW Youngstown, Jubilee Gardens, etc.) with the continued development of community gardens throughout the city. Community gardens provide numerous benefits to the community.
3. **Development of Pocket Parks** – The YNDC may partner with existing organizations to develop pocket parks and greenspaces in targeted neighborhoods throughout the city.
4. **Greening** – The YNDC may work with existing organizations (Treez Please and Cityscape) to green neighborhoods through replanting of street trees and other plantings.
5. **Deconstruction** – The process of deconstruction is a green alternative to the traditional process of demolition and is able to keep thousands of tons of building materials from the landfills. This process also creates opportunities to provide job training programs that teach carpentry and other skills. The YNDC may facilitate deconstructions pilot programs.
6. **“Green Houses”** – The YNDC may work to retrofit existing homes with energy efficient and green technologies. Homes may be retrofitted with green roofs, solar panels or something as simple as energy efficient light bulbs.

7. **Green Job Training** – The YNDC may partner with existing organizations to develop green job training programs that provide city residents with skills necessary for work in the new economy.

### **Economic Programming**

The YNDC will offer economic programming. The economic and financial programming will work to improve financial security, build wealth and expand opportunity for residents of city neighborhoods. The menu of economic programs may include the following:

1. **Individual Development Accounts** – Individual Development Accounts (IDA) are matched savings accounts that enable low-income families to save, build assets, and enter the financial mainstream. The YNDC will facilitate a community wealth building program with IDA's as a key component.
2. **Financial Literacy** – The YNDC may develop other financial literacy and wealth building initiatives to further expand opportunity for city residents.
3. **Foreclosure Prevention** - The YNDC may partner with Empowering and Strengthening Ohio's People and the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative to reach out to residents feeling the pressure of foreclosure. ESOP's nationally recognized program will be integrated into YNDC activities to keep people in their homes and neighborhoods intact.
4. **Homebuyer Education and Downpayment Assistance** – The YNDC may partner with Buy Into Youngstown and the Urban Homeownership Incentive Program to provide homebuyer education and downpayment assistance of up to \$10,000 to potential homeowners. This program may be utilized to educate and assist potential homeowners of rehabbed housing.

### **Complementary Programming**

The YNDC will also conduct a host of programs from housing rehabilitation to vacant lot management to individual development accounts that will complement one another and work to rebuild markets and create neighborhoods of choice throughout the City of Youngstown. The programming of the YNDC will also complement the work of the MVOC to reweave the social fabric of the community and create capacity within urban neighborhoods.

### **Leveraging Additional Resources**

Investing in the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation leverages additional public and private resources for neighborhood development. The Raymond John Wean Foundation has made a significant commitment to the organization and is able to match investments. Investment in this endeavor also leverages additional public and private resources and economic activity within city neighborhoods.

### **Current Status**

Currently, a diverse board composed of residents and representatives of stakeholder groups has been meeting monthly to begin crafting and developing the organization. The initial articles of incorporation have been filed and approved. A national search for an Executive Director will be conducted in late spring/early summer with the goal of having the organization functioning by summer 2009.

### **Conclusion**

The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation will play a critical role in realizing and implementing the Youngstown 2010 Vision. The YNDC will begin the long process of ensuring the viability of neighborhoods on all sides of town and developing neighborhoods of choice. Developing strong neighborhoods and quality of life will make Youngstown more attractive and competitive for existing residents (first and foremost), new residents and potential economic development projects.