



MT. PLEASANT
COMMUNITY ZONE

“Working together to build a better, stronger, sustainable community.”

**MT. PLEASANT COMPREHENSIVE
COMMUNITY
REVITALIZATION PLAN
(THE PLAN)**

2006

3438 East 137th at Kinsman Road · Cleveland, Ohio 44120 · (216) 752-3492 – Office · (216) 752-3497 - FAX
Web Site: www.mpcz.org
www.mtpleasantneighborhood.com

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FOREWORD

Mission: Mt. Pleasant Community Zone supports the aspirations of individuals and families in the Mt. Pleasant Community through direct service provision and grants.

Vision: Mt. Pleasant will be a healthy community that is an inviting locale in which to live, work, learn, worship and play. The community, families, and individuals will support each other, particularly in ensuring that the community's children obtain a quality education and grow up to become healthy, productive adults. Adequate resources will be available to provide a safe and clean community that provides necessary services and supports the economic self-sufficiency of all households.

Mt. Pleasant Community Zone (MPCZ) was created to support improvements in the quality of life for all residents of the Mt. Pleasant Community of Cleveland, Ohio and to implement the Mt. Pleasant Comprehensive Community Revitalization Plan (The Plan). MPCZ is responsible for updating The Plan, as needed, and for engaging the Mt. Pleasant Community in an assessment of the progress of The Plan.

The Plan developed and approved by the residents of Mt. Pleasant in 2001 targets four strategic directions for the healthy revitalization of the community: ***Economic Development, Education, Physical Environment and Safety, Community and Family Empowerment.***

MPCZ is dedicated to working together to build a better, stronger, sustainable community. To realize its vision of Mt. Pleasant, MPCZ brings resources together to build on existing community assets and facilitates change as needed. MPCZ works to expand the capacity of community leaders, faith and community based institutions, businesses, schools, and agencies by serving as an information clearinghouse. In addition, MPCZ helps to design and implement programs, provides funding, and evaluates the work as it relates to one or more of the strategic directions identified above. MPCZ periodically updates The Plan and bring it to life with specific objectives, multi-year goals and long-term outcomes. MPCZ also provides support to assist organizations in securing financial assistance for activities that support the implementation of The Plan, and, where necessary, fills gaps in service.

At MPCZ we envision Mt. Pleasant as a healthy, thriving community strengthened by a sense of unity, cooperation, and accountability. A true neighborhood that is safe and inviting; where neighbors know and support each other. A place where housing is available for people of all incomes, and a place where there are strong businesses, quality schools, and libraries. While this is our vision for the future of Mt. Pleasant, we know that our community has a lot of work to do. We will work to expand the capacity of our community leaders, faith and community based institutions, businesses, schools, and agencies through collaboration, cooperation, coordination, and planning.

We invite those who are interested in joining our efforts in improving the quality, accessibility, hopes and dreams of the Mt. Pleasant Community, to call, fax or e-mail us at (216) 752-3492, (216) 752-3497 Fax, E-mail: mpcz@mpcz.org

Acknowledgements

The Saint Luke's Foundation of Cleveland, Ohio supported a structured series of in-depth consultations and strategy sessions by the Mt. Pleasant Planning Council, a community-based planning initiative. These sessions had the ongoing input of Mt. Pleasant residents, human service providers, community businesses, educators, civic leaders, and funders.

The Mt. Pleasant Planning Council is to be congratulated for the many hours it rendered in the design and development of the Mt. Pleasant Comprehensive Community Revitalization Plan (The Plan). The endless meetings, phone calls and tasks resulted in a work in progress that promises to contribute to the transformation of the Mt. Pleasant Community.

The Board and staff of the Saint Luke's Foundation is to be commended for the vision and commitment demonstrated in supporting this comprehensive community initiative.

The Mt. Pleasant Planning Council Members: Strategic Interventions, Inc. Consultants

Ruth Addison	Jayne Kuhnen
Ahmad Akram	Debra Lewis-Curlee
Terri Ali	Charles McDowell
Representative John Barnes	Victor McDowell, Jr.
Beverly-Ann Burks	Carlton Moreland
Deborah Burstion-Donbraye	Ulysses Oatman
John Cash	Rekiat Olayiwola
Beverly R. Charles	Zachary Reed
Ruth Chatmon	Ron Register
Gregory Coles	Sarah Roberts
Reverend Edward Cryer	Councilperson Odelia V. Robinson
Bessie Durr	Daryle Rush
Senator Eric Fingerhut	Leah Gary
Eric Hodderson	Darlene Smith
Bruce Holmes	Thomas Stone
David Kantor	Reverend Eugene Ward
	Denise Zeman

Dozens of stable residential communities nationwide yearn for the chance to grow from the inside out: to take shape from their residents' empowered hopes and dreams of what a community can do and be, Mt. Pleasant is one place in America where such growth is taking place.

THE PLAN OVERVIEW

The Mt. Pleasant Comprehensive Community Revitalization Plan (The Plan), approved by the residents of Mt. Pleasant in 2001 targets four essential areas for the healthy revitalization of the community:

- **Economic Development** – expand opportunities for Mt. Pleasant residents to increase income and wealth;
- **Education** - expand the value of the educational opportunities and benefits available to Mt. Pleasant residents resulting in increased numbers of graduates with viable options for pursuing life-long learning, career goals or entrepreneurial opportunities;
- **Physical Environment & Safety** – maintain and improve the visual appeal of Mt. Pleasant, its functional capacity, sense of safety, and level of community investment; and
- **Community and Family Empowerment** – empower individuals and families in the Mt. Pleasant Community to reach their full potential.

MPCZ will combine physical and economic development with community services and education. Integrating these efforts with a commitment to build and support community institutions and social networks and maintaining community standards of behavior which support the continued evolution of a healthy community. MPCZ operates under three guiding principles.

1. **Build on assets** of the Mt. Pleasant Community.
2. **Expand the capacity** of leaders, organizations, and agencies to collaborate.
3. Increase the overall impact of everyone's work in the community through **coordination, collaboration, and planning.**

MPCZ will coordinate, support, serve as an information clearinghouse, monitor, fund and evaluate the involvement of the organizations, agencies, and institutions that are committed to carrying out the many activities set forth in The Plan. MPCZ is also responsible for providing the training, technical assistance, and capacity-building necessary for existing and new programs and organizations to successfully implement activities of The Plan.

MPCZ may provide and/or assist organizations in securing financial assistance for activities that support the implementation of The Plan and where necessary, fill gaps in service. MPCZ is responsible for updating The Plan, as needed, and for engaging the Mt. Pleasant Community in an assessment of the progress of The Plan. Finally, the MPCZ's Board of Directors, working with the Saint Luke's Foundation and other partners, will be assisting organizations in securing additional funding.

Vision of Mt. Pleasant Residents

Mt. Pleasant residents envision a healthy, thriving community strengthened by a strong sense of unity, cooperation, and accountability. Ours is a community known as a safe, inviting environment where neighbors know each other and support each other.

A strong business community providing goods and services while serving as an opportunity for living wage employment and business ownership for community residents. With a diversity of housing stock available for all incomes, Mt. Pleasant is a community of choice for individuals and families.

Our schools and public libraries are central to the life of the community -- from childhood through the senior years. Life-long, quality, relevant learning through our schools and other community institutions will help everyone to achieve their highest potential.

Mt. Pleasant is an empowered community with a strong past and a promising future. Through the power of its many voices; children, youth, young adults, and senior citizens, Mt. Pleasant is vigilant in protecting a high quality of life for all its residents. Mt. Pleasant epitomizes a healthy, viable community. A core set of values developed by the Community will guide the entire Revitalization process. They are:

Accountability	Justice
Children, Youth and Young Adults	Political Power & Voice
Community Spirit & Pride	Religious Freedom, Liberty & Expression
Competency	Safe, Secure, Welcoming Environment
Economic Security & Empowerment	Stable, Healthy Families
Fiscal Soundness	Transparency
Integrity	Unity

MT. PLEASANT'S HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although first settled in 1826 by British farmers from the Isle of Mann, the area now known as Mt. Pleasant remained predominantly rural until after 1900 when it was subdivided to accommodate European immigrants moving east from the densely developed neighborhoods near Downtown Cleveland. During the mid-1920's, Kinsman Road became the institutional and commercial center of a growing Jewish Community, and East Boulevard (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.) became the site of many stately homes, most of which remain today.

Between 1920 and 1930, the neighborhood's population tripled, rising from 14,000 to 42,000. Unlike other eastside Cleveland neighborhoods that underwent racial change in the 1960's and 1970's, Mt. Pleasant has been home to significant numbers of African-American residents since the turn of the century. It is reported that, in 1893, a contractor unable to pay cash wages compensated his African-American employees with vacant lots in a subdivision near Kinsman Road between East 126th and East 130th Streets. By 1907, approximately one hundred African-American families had settled in Mt. Pleasant. By 1970, over 95% of the neighborhood's residents were African-American.

Through the years Mt. Pleasant has remained a working class community with families who tend to live in their homes for generations. It is a well-established African-American community with a long history of community organizations, faith-based institutions, local businesses, and human service agencies. The median income for a family of four in Mt. Pleasant is \$16,078 – 9% lower than the average median income for a family of four in Cleveland as a whole. In 1999, one in four Mt. Pleasant residents received Food Stamps. Data for the year 2000 from Cuyahoga County programs suggest that 54% of Mt. Pleasant residents are living at 200% of poverty.

Mt. Pleasant is the most residentially developed neighborhood in the City of Cleveland with almost 64% of its land use devoted to housing. (The average for Cleveland is 34%.) Until recent years, population loss and an exodus of middle-income families had led to property deterioration and business vacancies, particularly along Kinsman Road and Union Avenue.

Today, although deterioration persists, middle-class and high-income families are moving back into Mt. Pleasant thanks to the development of a new shopping plaza at East 143rd and Kinsman, the presence of many well-maintained homes, and the construction of market-rate single-family houses in the Kingsbury Run and Reservoir Place Drive areas.

Additional information about the Mt. Pleasant Community, including maps, census data and the above-quoted history, is online at <http://www.nhlink.net/mt-pleasant/>. A useful overview of demographic, social and economic characteristics of the Mt. Pleasant Community can be found at <http://povertycenter.cwru.edu/doc/profile/Mt.Pleasant.html>,

STRATEGIC PROGRAM AREAS

Economic Development

Goal 1 - Strengthen the existing businesses in the Mt. Pleasant Community.

Objective 1: Establish a Mt. Pleasant Business Association.

Objective 2: Support the development of a Business Support Center to service Mt. Pleasant businesses.

Objective 3: Identify and promote economic development opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs in Mt. Pleasant.

Objective 4: Support physical development plans for the primary business corridors of the Mt. Pleasant Community.

Goal 2: Strengthen the economic base for residents in the Mt. Pleasant Community. (Added – March 2004)

Education – SCHOOLS ONLY

Goal 1 - Increase parental participation in the schools and improve communications between home and school.

Objective 1: Design and implement a parent/teacher communication program.

Goal 2 – Improve student attendance and decrease drop-out rate of students in the Mt. Pleasant Schools.

Objective 1: Create programs, activities, and incentives that increase student attendance.

Goal 3 – Strengthen the relationship between school, home, and public libraries to develop reading readiness, increase proficiency test scores and promote life-learning skills of Mt. Pleasant students.

Objective 1: Increase the involvement and participation of parents, community institutions, and businesses in student learning.

Goal 4 – Create in-school centers for community education, training, and services to enhance the image of schools as integral to the support system of the Mt. Pleasant Community.

Objective 1: Expand the use of Mt. Pleasant schools during non-school hours to support the health and human service needs of the community.

Physical Environment & Safety

Goal 1 – Strengthen the standards of living and behavior that result in increased community respect and beautification of Mt. Pleasant.

Objective 1: Establish standards and a community plan for the physical development and beautification of Mt. Pleasant.

Objective 2: Create a clearinghouse to provide technical support for the identification of grant and loan sources for home repairs and business upgrades to bring properties up to city code and community standards.

Goal 2 – Increase the overall sense of safety of the residents, proprietors, workers, and visitors to the Mt. Pleasant Community.

Objective 1: Identify specific interventions, which will result in an increased sense of safety for Mt. Pleasant residents.

Community and Family Empowerment

Goal 1 – Establish and utilize formal and informal social systems that support individuals and families of the Mt. Pleasant Community.

Objective 1: Inventory community assets that support Mt. Pleasant's individuals and families.

Objective 2: Increase the capacity and effectiveness of community organizations and faith-based institutions working to support individuals and families of the Mt. Pleasant Community.

Objective 3: Increase the effectiveness of fathers to be active participants in their child(ren)'s life and learning. (NEW)

Goal 2 Improve and expand communication between the residents of Mt. Pleasant and the institutions, organizations and agencies serving the community.

Objective 1: Understand the ways in which Mt. Pleasant residents currently access information.

Goal 3 – Collaborate with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and other partners to improve the safety and utility of school buildings and their campuses in Mt. Pleasant.

Objective 1: Increase community support and community/school collaboration on improving the infrastructure of the schools of Mt. Pleasant.

Develop an evaluation process to measure the success of strategies employed in accomplishing the above goals and objectives of the Mt. Pleasant Comprehensive Community Revitalization Plan.

PROLOGUE TO A NEW MT. PLEASANT COMMUNITY

The completion of the planning process signaled the beginning of the most important stage of the Initiative: the implementation of the Mt. Pleasant Comprehensive Community Revitalization Plan (The Plan). Hundreds of people and scores of agencies and organizations have invested their time and resources in the planning process.

The Plan heightened the sense of community spirit and expectation for the future among residents and stakeholders of the community.

The community is engaged and eagerly awaits with anticipation the product of this effort – a healthy, revitalized Mt. Pleasant through the efforts of the Mt. Pleasant Community Zone, Inc.

We again invite those who are interested in joining our efforts in improving the quality, accessibility, hopes and dreams of the Mt. Pleasant Community through financial support and human resources.

For more information contact:
Barbara A. Mosby
(216) 752-3492 - Phone
(216) 752-3497 - Fax
E-mail: bamosby@mpcz.org

Board of Directors

The Mt. Pleasant Community Zone, Inc. board members are comprised of up to 25 directors.

Dr. Frank C. Williams, President
LaShorn K. Caldwell, Vice President
Tyrone A. McGuinea, Treasurer
Cynthia Jones, Secretary
Bessie Durr
Scott Heape
Harriet Lubin
Ulysses Oatman, Honorary

Phoebe Pearson, Honorary
Leona Reed, Honorary
Commander Roy Rich
Angel Robinson
Rashia Rosalind Smith
Elder Larry Tatum
Councilman Zack Reed
Ward 3 Ex-Officio

MT. PLEASANT COMMUNITY ZONE (MPCZ)

Staff

Debra Lewis-Curlee, Executive Director
Barbara A. Mosby, Grants/Office/Personnel Manager
Wendy Murphy, Director of Finance
Beverly-Ann Burks, Program Director
Tare' Beaver, Community Economic Development Facilitator
Melanie F. Johnson, Administrative Assistant
Mary Parker Landers, Outreach & Community Organizer

GUIDELINES for COMMUNITY COLLABORATION & SUPPORT

MPCZ is committed to working in partnership with those seeking support and collaboration. MPCZ will assist organizations/agencies in carrying out the action steps included in the strategic areas of The Plan. MPCZ's support and collaboration has one geographic area - the Mt. Pleasant Social Planning Area (SPA) with emphasis on four (4) primary strategic directions: **Education, Economic Development, Physical Environment & Safety, Community and Family Empowerment**. MPCZ will look at an organization's ability to demonstrate match support in grants and/or in-kind contributions. All agencies, organizations, and institutions considering applying to MPCZ are encouraged to call for the Guidelines (216) 752-3492 or look them up on our website www.mpcz.org

Funded by:



4208 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103