

STEELE

Neighborhood Description

The Steele Neighborhood offers a well-maintained inventory of low-density housing bound by Ryerson Creek and its wetlands to the north, and the auto-oriented commercial uses along Apple Avenue to the south. The neighborhood is currently home to the city's middle school, but a project is underway to vacate this building and relocate the middle school to a more central location in the city.

Zoned Land Use

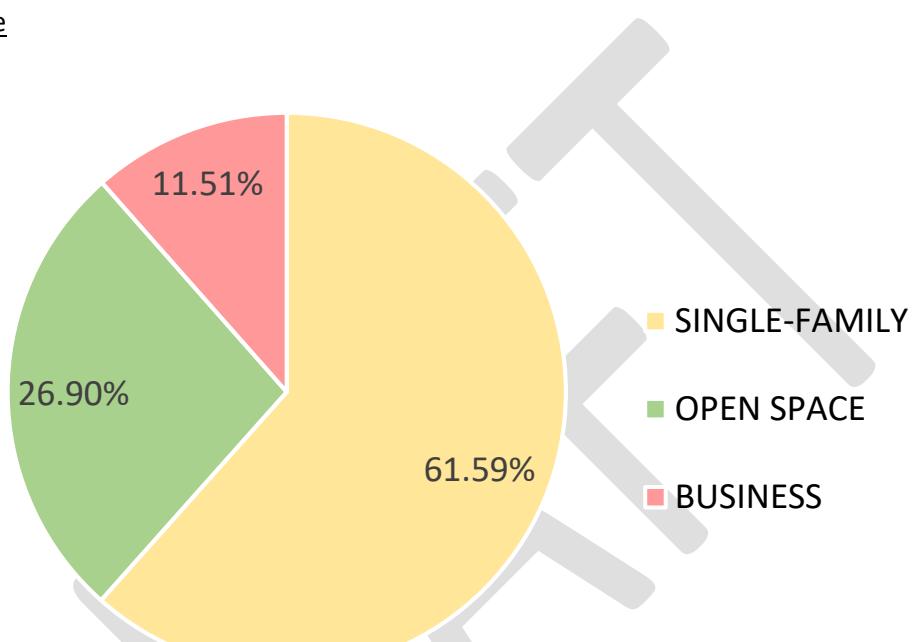


Chart I: Steele zoned land use as a percentage of the neighborhood's total land area

The majority of the land in Steele is zoned for single-family detached housing on medium to large lots. Concentrated along Ryerson Creek and the surrounding wetlands, a sizeable portion of land is zoned for open space. Just over 10% of the neighborhood is zoned to allow for business uses, with all of those parcels being located along two major streets, Apple Avenue and Getty Street.

Housing Stock

- Total Houses – 288
- Property Ownership
 - o Owned – 227 (79%)
 - o Rented – 61 (21%)
- Missing Middle Housing Units – 3 (1%)
- Apartment Complexes – 0
- Vacant Residential Lots (publicly-owned) – 6

This neighborhood consists almost entirely of single-family detached homes. Only two duplexes and one small multiplex exist as non-conforming uses. Most alleys have been vacated and replatted, making

higher-density missing middle housing types difficult to develop. There are very few vacant residential lots, however, there are a handful of very large residential lots, created through a series of lot combinations.

The blocks between Roberts and Creston still contain alleys and should be considered for missing middle housing development. Lots without alleys may still be suitable for duplexes, but not if they are accessed from Apple, which could cause traffic concerns. Home ownership is high in the Steele neighborhood. The neighborhood contains no apartment complexes, and most rental housing options are limited mainly to single-family detached houses.

Commercial Inventory

- Commercial Corridors
 - Apple Commercial Corridor
 - Getty Commercial Corridor
- Interior Commercial Buildings None

Residents of the neighborhood have a couple of options for walkable commercial destinations, although the areas are more automobile-oriented than pedestrian-friendly. There are no commercial buildings in the interior of the neighborhood, so most businesses are positioned along major streets at the perimeter of the neighborhood. The Getty and Apple corridors offer a pharmacy, restaurants, a small grocer, automobile services, and office space. Apple, west of US-31, offers traditional fast food and retail options commonly associated with highway exits.

Industrial Inventory

None

Parks/Recreational Opportunities

The Park, Recreation, and Community Facilities chapter of the Master Plan will discuss the Steele neighborhood's parks in more detail.

See map denoting location of all parks, community gardens, public/private parks and open spaces, etc. Steele neighborhood park/recreational opportunities below:

- Ryerson Creek (paved walk and nature paths)
- Public School track and field
- Sheldon Park (in nearby Sheldon Park neighborhood)
- Smith-Ryerson Park (in nearby Jackson Hill and Angell neighborhoods)

Civic Buildings

- Schools 1150 Amity Ave – 13.2 acres
- Faith Based Institutions 1084 Allen Ave – 0.63 acres
930 Creston St – 1.25 acres

Neighborhood Center

As the smallest neighborhood by land area, Steele has limited areas that could be considered a neighborhood center. With the school soon to depart, the Apple Avenue Corridor is likely the next best location.

Transportation

The Transportation and Mobility chapter of the Master Plan will contain further discussion and recommendations.

- Public Right-of-Way:
 - Major Streets: Apple, Getty, Creston, Home
 - Possible Road Diets: Apple, Getty
 - Alleys: Most blocks do not contain alleys. Alleys exist in a few blocks on the east side of the neighborhood behind the business district. With improvements to these alleys, higher density housing may be possible. A map of alley locations and conditions in the Steele neighborhood is in production.
 - Sidewalk Network: A nearly complete sidewalk network exists throughout the Steele neighborhood.
- Non-motorized Trails: A rustic trail is located along the northern edge of Ryerson Creek. Barriers exist limiting its connection to Smith-Ryerson Park.
- Public Transportation: MATS Routes 2, 12, and Go2 Service
- Steele is well connected to the city-wide street network via Apple Avenue and Getty Street. Access to US-31 is very convenient as the highway constitutes the neighborhood's east border and entry and exit ramps serve Apple Avenue. A well-connected network of streets within the neighborhood allows for easy navigation.

Findings and Action Steps

Finding 1: The former greenhouse property at 808 Oak Ave is underutilized and creating blight. The current zoning of R-1, Low Density Single-Family limits the redevelopment options for the 9.1-acre property. Much of the property to the north is undevelopable because of the floodplain designation. However, this property in conjunction with the other lots on the north side of Oak Ave could offer a unique opportunity for multi-family housing. The property north of the creek could be valuable to the city for a public easement to connect walking paths.

Action Step 1.1: Rezone the properties on the north side of Oak Avenue to allow for denser housing options.



Action Step 1.2: Acquire an easement on the northern portion of this lot to allow for a nature path connection.





Finding 2: Although there are minimal vacant residential lots in the neighborhood, there are several properties that have acquired other buildable lots to increase their parcel size. The map below shows eight parcels that have over 100 feet of street frontage, with one having over 225 feet of frontage on two different streets. These properties are underutilized because they previously contained homes that paid for the infrastructure (streets, sewers, etc.) and services that they use. It should be encouraged that such large conglomerations of parcels be returned to their original sizes.

Action Step 2.1: While little can be done to require splitting up these lots, future policies should be adopted to limit excessive lot combinations and/or the amount of street frontage allowed for a single lot.



Finding 3: The civic buildings in the neighborhood serve the community well. However, if any of the institutions located here were to vacate, they would leave a sizeable hole in the neighborhood. When it comes to the potential redevelopment of these properties, it may be more important to consider how the built environment will fit in with the neighborhood, rather than the type of use.

Action Step 3.1: Rezone properties containing civic buildings to allow for a variety of uses that will also require development to fit in with the existing form and scale of the neighborhood.



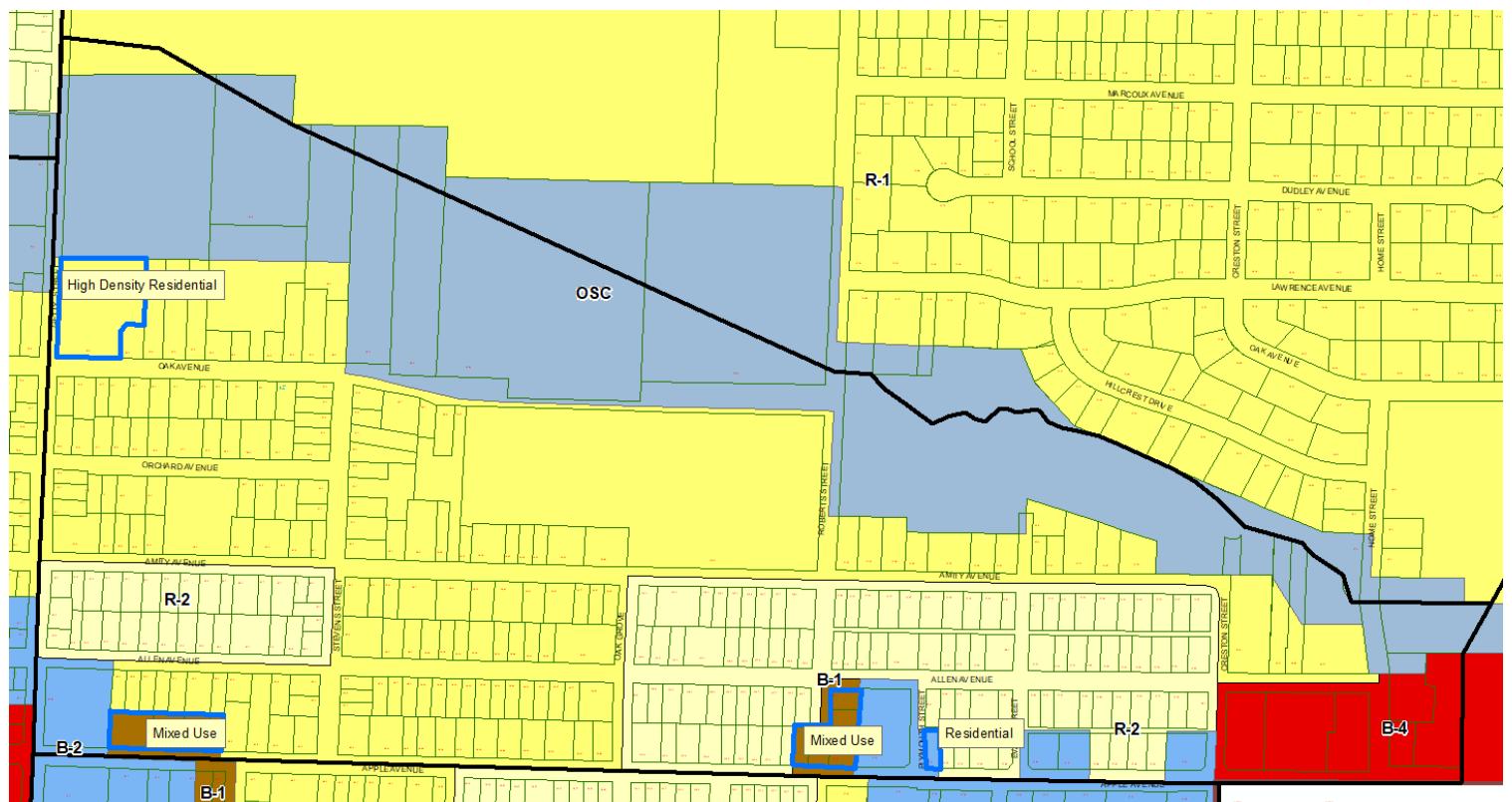
Finding 4: The trail along Ryerson Creek offers an opportunity for hiking almost all the way to Smith-Ryerson Park, but is limited by rough terrain and one privately-owned parcel.

Action Step 4.1: Work with the property owner to establish a public easement or acquire a portion of the parcel to create a more accessible hiking path along the creek.

Finding 5: There is a lack of diverse housing options in the neighborhood. The many alley vacations that have taken place in Steele make it difficult to incorporate more dense housing options.

Action Step 5.1: Rezone residential parcels adjacent to commercial corridors with active alleys to allow for missing middle housing and limited commercial options.

Draft Future Land Use Map



Neighborhood Goals

Staff has met with every neighborhood association a number of times to discuss their vision for the future. Below is a list of goals that were heard most frequently. If you have new goals and/or action steps, please list them on the following page.

Goal 1: Expand housing services for homeowners, renters and landlords.

Action Step 1.1 Support new landlords and renters with welcome resources.

Action Step 1.2 Promote good landlords through an incentives and marketing program.

Action Step 1.3 Promote neighborhood beautification by incentivizing property upkeep and blight removal.

Goal 2: Support existing residents and preserve the existing housing stock.

Action Step 2.1: Improve code compliance and enforcement effectiveness.

Action Step 2.2: Provide support for homeowners to update and remodel their homes and properties.

Action Step 2.3: Assist residents in need with maintenance and repairs.

Goal 3: Promote and empower neighborhoods.

Action Step 3.1: Encourage neighborhood stewardship and provide resources to neighborhood organizations.

Action Step 3.2: Promote neighborhood amenities, such as parks and schools.

Action Step 3.3 Increase access to the waterfront for the community as a whole.

Goal 4: Pursue and encourage new housing development opportunities.

Action Step 4.1: Create public/private partnership programs that will assist in the creation of affordable housing units.

Action Step 4.2: Identify areas that are suitable for missing middle housing (rowhomes, duplexes, quadplexes, accessory dwelling units)

Action Step 4.3: Identify potential sites for affordable housing/senior housing near transit and services.

Goal 5: Promote viable neighborhood-scale commercial options within walking distance of residents.

Action Step 5.1: Identify existing commercial buildings located within neighborhoods (not large commercial corridors) and determine which ones are viable for neighborhood scale commercial and which ones would serve the neighborhood better as residential.

Action Step 5.1: Incorporate pedestrian friendly, walkability measures to implement that will allow residents to walk to major commercial corridors.

Action Step 5.3: Provide options in the zoning ordinance to allow for accessory commercial units.

Please complete this survey so staff may better understand neighbor's ideas and concerns.

Name & contact info (optional)

Your neighborhood

Goals for your neighborhood

Proposed ideas to accomplish those goals

Other goals, ideas or concerns you may have for the city as a whole, regardless of neighborhood



