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DEVELOPMENT

Community

SEPTEMBER 1974

St. John Progress Indicated

*Comprehensive program
formulated
for redevelopment*

The St. John industrial park concept is an action plan for economic growth, tailored to meet the needs of this community on two extremes: the extrication of residents from a substandard neighborhood, and the replacement of those people by new residents devoted to compatible uses, those we see as industrial. This process will solve the immediate needs of St. John residents. And it will bring in new residents, industrial firms who will help arrest our declining tax base, provide new tax incomes and most importantly, provide new jobs for the people of Flint. To achieve this objective, we have assembled government resources and requested the active involvement and participation of the private sector.

The Background of St. John.

The St. John street area represents about 255 acres (exclusive of Interstate 475 right-of-way), and it is commonly agreed that the area today is one of the worst, if not the worst, neighborhood in the City. St. John was identified as needing urban renewal treatment in 1958, as part of the City's Master Planning effort. The Plan indicated that St. John contained the City's worst housing and community conditions, and recommended that the area be redeveloped as an industrial park. This called for the relocation of residential and business residents, plus the clearance of 1053 structures.

In 1970, the St. John urban renewal plan was adopted by the City of Flint, and was approved by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under a new concept of urban renewal: the Neighborhood Development Program (NDP). St. John became NDP-6.

Work began, on a limited scale, but it was handicapped by progressively declining funding from HUD.



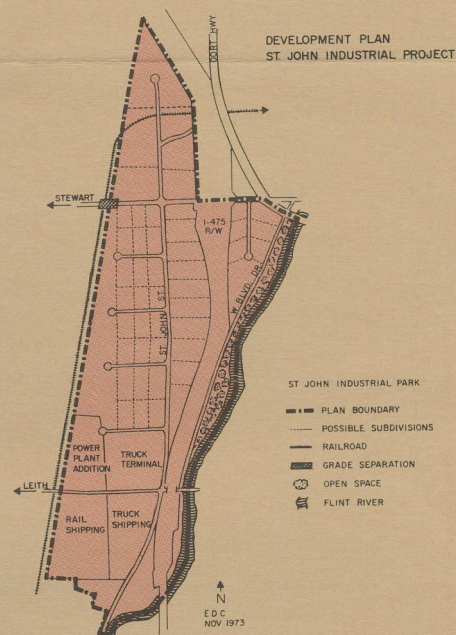
When studied in 1970 as NDP-6, St. John covered 312 acres, a population of 3,031 persons in 910 of the 1,053 housing units. Its vacancy rate of 13.5% was not the City's highest, but rentals averaging \$80 monthly were the very lowest in Flint. A tour through the area showed why. There are estimated to be only 100 acres of Class A industrial land in Genesee county. More is needed if business growth is not to be directed elsewhere, away from Flint.

In fall of 1973, the Flint City Council meeting at the Waldenwood conference, cited St. John as the number one priority for City renewal activity. Community leadership has supported this priority. This resulted in the authorization of:

- 80% of City funds from HUD, via BCA or Omnibus legislation, for at least two years, or \$8 million total
- \$2 million of a \$4.8 million bond issue for Fiscal Year 1975

A recent up-dating of earlier cost estimates permitted a 14% reduction in costs, which are detailed in Table I.

(More recent estimates of HUD funding suggest that the \$8 million total may rise to \$9.33 million, which with other adjustments in this budget outline will revise most figures presented here.)



Proposed Financial Plan

Land clearance is now estimated at about \$11.6 million. This covers land acquisition, relocation of residents, and structures demolition. Project improvement costs are anticipated to be financed by federal EDA grant, and the private sector. Therefore, to clear and redevelop the project area, the projected available funds are suggested in Table II.

Analysis of the Table II data shows that financing for the project can be packaged this fiscal year, provided that the private sector can contribute \$4 million. This would provide the necessary guarantee that St. John will be cleared and project improvements be in place by the time the land is assembled for disposition. Although the City can, at least in theory,

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