

Bowling Green Exterior Housing Evaluation Survey

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Submitted by:

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Introduction

In 1973, the Wood County Health District adopted a housing code. The housing code was then revised in 1976. The purpose of the code was to allow the Health District to inspect homes and correct unhealthy, unsafe, and deteriorating housing structures. The goal of the Health District's housing program is to protect occupants and the public from unsafe and unhealthy housing situations and to preserve the existing housing stock. In 1986, the Housing Code was superseded by the "Wood County Health, Safety and Sanitation Regulations for Structures and Vacant Lots" also referred to as the Health District's Structure Code. This code incorporated the previous Housing Code but expanded the ability of the Health District to deal with unsafe, unhealthy or deteriorating situations in all structures and vacant lots. The Health District's Structure Code has since been revised in 1988, 1995, 2000, 2004 and 2005.

A contract between the City of Bowling Green and the Wood County Health District has enabled the Health District to engage in a two-phase evaluation and enforcement Exterior Housing Inspection Program within the City of Bowling Green.

Purpose

Once every five years, the Health District performs an Exterior Housing Evaluation Survey (EHES) at the Request of the City. This data gathering survey allows the Wood County Health District to identify the neighborhoods that have exterior housing structure, maintenance and sanitation problems. In addition, the data from the EHES is available for use by other City departments.

Information obtained from the EHES is used by the Wood County Health District in the second phase of the Exterior Housing Inspection Program, Exterior Housing and Sanitation Inspections (EHSI). The EHSI is an enforcement activity used to correct housing and exterior sanitation problems in statistically significant neighborhoods. The neighborhoods in the City selected for EHSI is based on the findings of EHES.

Procedures

In 1973, the Bowling Green Housing Commission recommended dividing Bowling Green into 43 neighborhoods. The Health District used those 43 neighborhoods until 1985. The Bowling Green City Planning Department then recommended that the 43 neighborhoods be combined into 13 neighborhoods and a Downtown Business District. The City Planning Department developed boundaries for 13 neighborhoods based on the original boundaries of the 43 neighborhoods taking into consideration natural barriers, age of housing, type of housing, and applicable federal requirements. The Health District adopted the 13 neighborhoods as recommended by the City Planning Department. In 2006, the City was divided into five (5) neighborhoods based on the census tracts used in the Consolidated Plan. This format remained unchanged for 2011.

In 1985, the EHES started. Since computers were available for doing the statistical analysis, the Health District used most of 1985 for testing different methods of data gathering and computerization. The EHES data gathering began in earnest in 1986 and completed by December of 1988. The Downtown Business District was not inspected primarily because most of the housing units are above commercial structures and are not easily inspected or clearly marked.

Before the EHES survey in 1988, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006 the City Planning Department and the Health District met to determine categories to be included on these surveys. There were 25 categories of data

collected in 1986, 28 categories in 1991, 29 categories in 1996, 23 categories of data in 2001 and 24 categories in 2006 and 2011. Criteria used for the 2011 EHES are in Appendix A.

2011	Score
1. Off Street Parking	S U NA
2. Public Walks	S U NA
3. Private Walks	S U NA
4. Accessory Structures	S U NA
5. Garage Conditions	S U NA
6. Attached Garage	Y N NA
7. Grading and Drainage	S U NA
8. Exterior Sanitation	S U NA
9. Yard Maintenance	S U NA
10. Soffits and Roof Edges	S U NA
11. Roof	S U NA
12. Gutters and Downspouts	S U NA
13. Chimneys	S U NA
14. Siding Type	A B S W
15. Siding Conditions	S U NA
16. Paint	S U NA
17. Porches and Steps	S U NA
18. Foundations	S U NA
19. Dumpsters	S U NA
20. Starlings and Pigeons	S U NA
21. Stairs and Railings (4 or more steps)	S U NA
22. Doors	S U NA
23. Windows	S U NA
24. Address Present (On House or Mailbox)	Y N

Key	
S – Standard	<u>Siding Type</u>
U – Substandard	A – Aluminum or Vinyl
Y – Yes	B – Brick, Block or Stone
N – No	S – Shingles
NA – Not Applicable	W – Wood

For the EHES survey for 1988, 1991, 1996, 2001 the following ten primary categories were used to determine if housing was deficient, neglected, or neither based on the Health District regulations.

Ten Primary Categories

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Roofs | 6. Doors |
| 2. Chimneys | 7. Windows |
| 3. Siding Condition | 8. Accessory Structures |
| 4. Porches | 9. Foundations |
| 5. Stair and Railings | 10. Soffits and Roof Edging |

Based on Residential Rehabilitation Standards (RRS) required by the Ohio Department of Development four categories were added to 2006 EHES Survey making the primary categories fourteen (14). The added categories were.

- 11. Driveways
- 12. Private Walks
- 13. Public Walkways
- 14. Exterior Sanitation

If a house and property is substandard in two or three of these fourteen (14) primary categories, it is classified as “deficient”. If house and property is substandard in four (4) or more of the fourteen (14) primary categories, it is classified as “neglected”. Data from the other ten (10) categories was collected to meet the needs of the Health District and other City Departments

Survey Year	Surveyor
1988	Brad Espen
1991	Ted Hartwell
1996	Angela Windau
2001	Kelly Sattler
2006	Tom Rutter / Ted Hartwell
2011	Tom Rutter / Paul Hagen

Materials

The 1988 survey was completed using a clipboard and hand marking each survey item. In 1991, 1996 and 2001, data was collected on a handheld Microflex PC and uploaded to the office server. In 2006 and 2011, the data was stored on a laptop computer utilizing custom software.

Methods

The following guidelines and assumptions were used during the inspection to determine whether a house being inspected was standard or substandard in a category.

1. Appendix A explains the criteria used for each category in the 2011 survey.
2. Any category not under the jurisdiction of the Health District's Structure Code but under the jurisdiction of the City was marked standard if in compliance with the City's codes. A category was judged substandard if the City's codes were not met.
3. If a category was not present or not visible, the item was marked as "Not Applicable".
4. If a house was on a corner and it faced or was numbered on the street perpendicular to the street currently being inspected, it was skipped until the perpendicular street was inspected. If a house on a corner did not have any street number, it was assumed to be on whichever street the house faced. Once the inspections for the day were completed, the inspector used the Wood County Auditor website to assign street numbers to unmarked addresses on the Data Forms.
5. Any category that came under the jurisdiction of the Health District's Structure Code was marked standard if in compliance with the Housing Code. The category was judged substandard if the sanitarian would normally have written a violation notice for the correction of the situation in response to a complaint.

Results

- Report 1** Number of houses in the city as well as the total number of houses deficient in each of the fourteen (14) primary categories. There is also a table containing the six categories with the most deficiencies.
- Report 2** Number of houses classified as 'deficient' or 'neglected'. There is also a bar graph showing the count of homes with one or more deficiencies.
- Report 3** Deficient and Neglected homes by neighborhood.
- Report 4** Non-primary deficiencies by neighborhood. There is also a count of garages by size.
- Report 5** Historical comparison of surveys with the number of deficiencies for each category. There is also a historical comparison of 'deficient' and 'neglected' homes.

Conclusion

Programs aimed at making community improvements are often administered without taking a step back to evaluate the success and level of improvement achieved. The Bowling Green Housing Program began in the mid 1970's and has avoided this pitfall from the beginning.

Taking time to evaluate the program has allowed us to identify deficiencies and validate our achievements or failures as the case may be. The community exterior housing survey is an essential element of any worthwhile community maintenance and improvement effort.

The evaluation techniques used by the Health District have improved over time, including significant changes to the survey process in 1988. The process became more standardized and the data format allows for reasonable comparisons between survey years. Therefore, the report refers to survey comparisons from 1988 forward.

When comparing the 2011 data with 2006, the total number of deficiencies decreased from 1,614 to 628 (-61%). In addition, the number of properties with zero deficiencies increased from 4,303 to 5,021 (+14%). The number of homes surveyed in 2011 also increased to 5,524 (+4%).

As stated earlier, the data collected is useful to both the Wood County Health District and City of Bowling Green officials. Issues relating to the survey and Health District efforts are discussed.

The purposes of the survey from the health district's housing program prospective are:

1. To evaluate the status of individual housing structures using the fourteen (14) primary categories.
2. To evaluate the sanitation of the housing areas within neighborhoods.
3. To compare the level of improvement in housing and sanitation from one survey period to the next.
4. To identify neighborhoods in need of improvement toward achieving compliance with current housing standards.

Report 1: Deficiencies in 14 Primary Categories

Neighborhood	01	02	16	19	All
Roofs	14 1.7%	30 2.8%	7 0.3%	3 0.1%	54
Chimneys	13 1.6%	21 2.0%	5 0.2%	4 0.2%	43
Siding Condition	8 1.0%	23 2.2%	10 0.4%	8 0.5%	49
Porches	32 4.0%	47 4.5%	19 0.8%	22 1.4%	120
Stairs And Railings	24 3.0%	40 3.8%	1 0.0%	4 0.2%	70
Doors	3 0.3%	5 0.4%	0 0.0%	1 0.0%	9
Windows	2 0.2%	10 0.9%	0 0.0%	3 0.1%	15
Foundations	6 0.7%	6 0.5%	0 0.0%	2 0.1%	14
Soffits And Roof Edges	13 1.6%	31 2.9%	4 0.1%	6 0.3%	54
Accessory Structures	9 1.1%	21 2.0%	6 0.2%	15 0.9%	51
Driveways And Off Street Parking	12 1.5%	10 0.9%	12 0.5%	2 0.1%	36
Private Walks	6 0.7%	18 1.7%	1 0.0%	0 0.0%	25
Public Walks	16 2.0%	16 1.5%	4 0.1%	1 0.0%	37
Exterior Sanitation	12 1.5%	23 2.2%	3 0.1%	13 0.8%	51
Total Deficiencies	170	301	72	84	628
Total Homes	796	1038	2178	1509	5524

Note 1: There were a total of three houses in neighborhoods 18 and 20, each having a deficiency (1 stairs / railings, 2 paint deficiencies).

Note 2: Total of surveyed houses: 5,524

Comments: Neighborhoods 01 and 02 had 27.0% and 47.9% of the deficiencies in the 14 primary categories, respectively, while neighborhoods 16 and 19 each had 11.4% and 13.3% of the deficiencies.

The six highest areas of deficiency were:

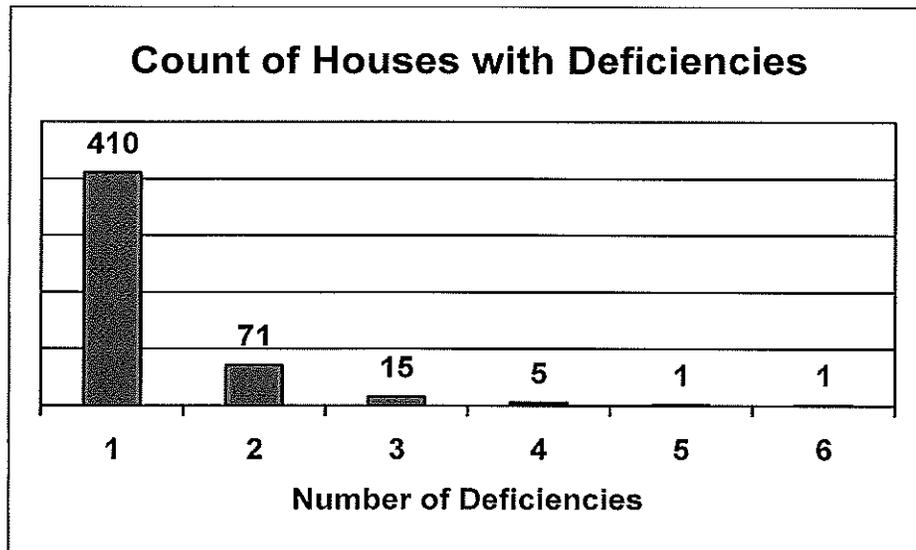
Deficiency	Count	Percent
Porches	120	19.1%
Stairs and railings	70	11.1%
Soffits and roof edges	54	8.5%
Roofs	54	8.5%
Accessory structures	51	8.1%
Exterior sanitation	51	8.1%

Report 2: Houses Deficient in 14 Primary Categories

There were 86 houses classified as deficient, meaning they had 2-3 deficiencies in the primary categories.

There were 7 houses classified as neglected, meaning they had 4 or more deficiencies in the primary categories.

There were 5,021 houses with no deficiencies.



Note 1: Previous surveys had 10 primary categories with four new categories being added in 2006.

Report 3: Deficient and Neglected Homes

Deficient Homes: 2-3 deficiencies

Neglected Homes: 4 or more deficiencies

Deficient Homes by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	01	02	16	19	All
Number Homes	21	48	6	11	86
Percent of Total Homes	2.6%	4.6%	0.2%	0.7%	1.5%

Neglected Homes by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	01	02	16	19	All
Number Homes	1	6	0	0	7
Percent of Total Homes	0.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

Report 4: Houses Deficient in Non-Primary Categories

Neighborhood	01	02	16	19	All
Garage Condition	37	48	14	27	126
Grading And Drainage	0	0	0	0	0
Yard Maintenance	2	11	5	9	27
Dumpsters	7	4	2	3	16
Starling And Pigeons	3	1	0	0	4
Address Posted	12	24	2	14	52
Gutters	16	31	4	12	63
Paint	91	123	63	59	338
Total Deficiencies	168	242	90	124	626
Total Homes	796	1,038	2,178	1,509	5,524

The three highest non-primary deficiency categories were:

1. Paint – peeling paint, unprotected bare wood (338)
2. Garage condition – missing siding, doors or windows; peeling paint; poor roof (126)
3. Gutters and downspouts – if present, unable to properly drain water (63)

Note 1: Paint deficiency data was not included in the 2006 survey.

Neighborhood	01	02	16	19	All
1-Car Garage	277	327	327	242	1,173
2-Car Garage	185	217	1,696	998	3,097
3-Car Garage	10	9	39	78	136
4+Car Garage	2	0	78	50	130
No Garage	322	485	38	141	988
Total	796	1,038	2,178	1,509	5,524

Report 5: Historical comparison of surveys

Survey Year	2011	2006	2001	1996	1991	1988
Number Of Homes	5,524	5,305	4,915	4,380	4,315	4,232
Soffits And Roof Edges	54	238	257	74	na	na
Roofs	54	129	64	16	50	263
Stairs And Railings	70	223	64	12	9	324
Siding Condition	49	165	29	35	161	62
Accessory Structures	51	169	17	24	55	193
Porches	120	262	11	29	30	214
Chimneys	43	152	11	54	46	239
Windows	15	39	1	10	11	843
Doors	9	11	0	9	8	69
Foundations	14	44	0	10	6	152
Private Walks	25	24	14	27	71	286
Public Walks	37	99	200	280	411	724
Driveways And Off-Street Parking	36	56	na	3	727*	1,068*
Exterior Sanitation	51	123	12	97	na	211
Gutters And Downspouts	63	152	na	73	100	211

*Prior to the 1996 survey, driveways were considered deficient if they were not paved. Beginning with the 1996 survey and continuing to the present, unpaved driveways in good condition were not considered deficient.

Survey Year	2011	2006	2001	1996	1991
Number of homes	5,524	5,305	4,915	4,380	4,315
Number of primary categories	14	14	10	10	10
Deficient homes	86	295	46	36	52
Neglected homes	7	34	0	2	4

Appendix A - Criteria Used For the 2011 Survey

Address of Property	Substandard if no address could be found on mailbox or house.
Off Street Parking	Not applicable, standard or substandard if not paved or if paving material was badly deteriorated.
Public Walks	Not applicable, standard, or substandard if there were tripping or fall hazards caused by heaving, sinking or sloping of more than one inch (1"). In addition, public walk were judged substandard if badly deteriorated or overgrown with bushes or trees.
Private Walks	Not applicable, standard or substandard if there were tripping or fall hazards caused by heaving, sinking, or sloping of more than one inch (1"). Also, private walks were judged substandard if badly deteriorated or overgrown with bushes or trees.
Accessory Structures	Not applicable, standard or substandard if any non-attached structure was not judged to be used as a garage. If the roof, siding or foundation did not meet code, the structure was judged substandard.
Number of Car Garage	The number of cars that the garage was built to house was entered into the computer.
Attached Garage	Yes, No, or Not Present.
Grading & Drainage	Standard or substandard if it was obvious that water would pond or flow toward the house.
Exterior Sanitation	Standard or substandard if trash and garbage was evident and presented a health hazard.
Yard Maintenance	Standard or substandard if yard showed visible signs of neglect, such as long grass and untrimmed bushes and trees.
Soffits & Roof Edges	Standard or substandard if showed signs of deterioration and/or peeling paint.
Roof	Standard or Substandard if evidence of missing shingles or roofing materials, large amounts of tar, or other patches.
Gutters & Downspouts	If gutters were present on a house, they were judged standard if they were intact along the roofline and along the downspouts to the ground. If the gutters and downspouts were rusted, damaged, or overgrown, they are judged substandard.
Chimneys	Standard or substandard if there is evidence of deteriorated mortar joints or bricks missing.

Siding Types	A - Aluminum or vinyl B = Brick, block, or stone S = Shingles W = Wood All types of siding present were recorded.
Siding Condition	Standard or substandard if several broken or missing areas were noted. Also, substandard if in need of some form of protective treatment.
Paint	Standard or substandard if windows, trim, or wooden area were in need of protective treatment.
Porches	Not applicable, standard or substandard if there was evidence of structural failure or danger of injury.
Foundations	Standard or substandard if evidence of severe cracks, failed to support the intended structure, or severe evidence of mortar joint deterioration.
Dumpsters	Not applicable, standard or substandard if dumpsters were not sealed tightly, had no lids, or if they were overflowing.
Starlings & Pigeons	Yes, if observed evidence of roosting or nesting of more than six (6) birds, otherwise, no.
Stairs & Railings	Not Applicable, standard or substandard if four (4) or more steps were present, and evidence of deterioration of treads or support structure. Also, if no railing was present on stairs, they were marked as substandard.
Doors	Standard or substandard if broken or contained visible cracks or holes.
Windows	Standard or substandard if broken or contained visible cracks or holes.