

Vacant Structures and Lots in the El Camino Neighborhood

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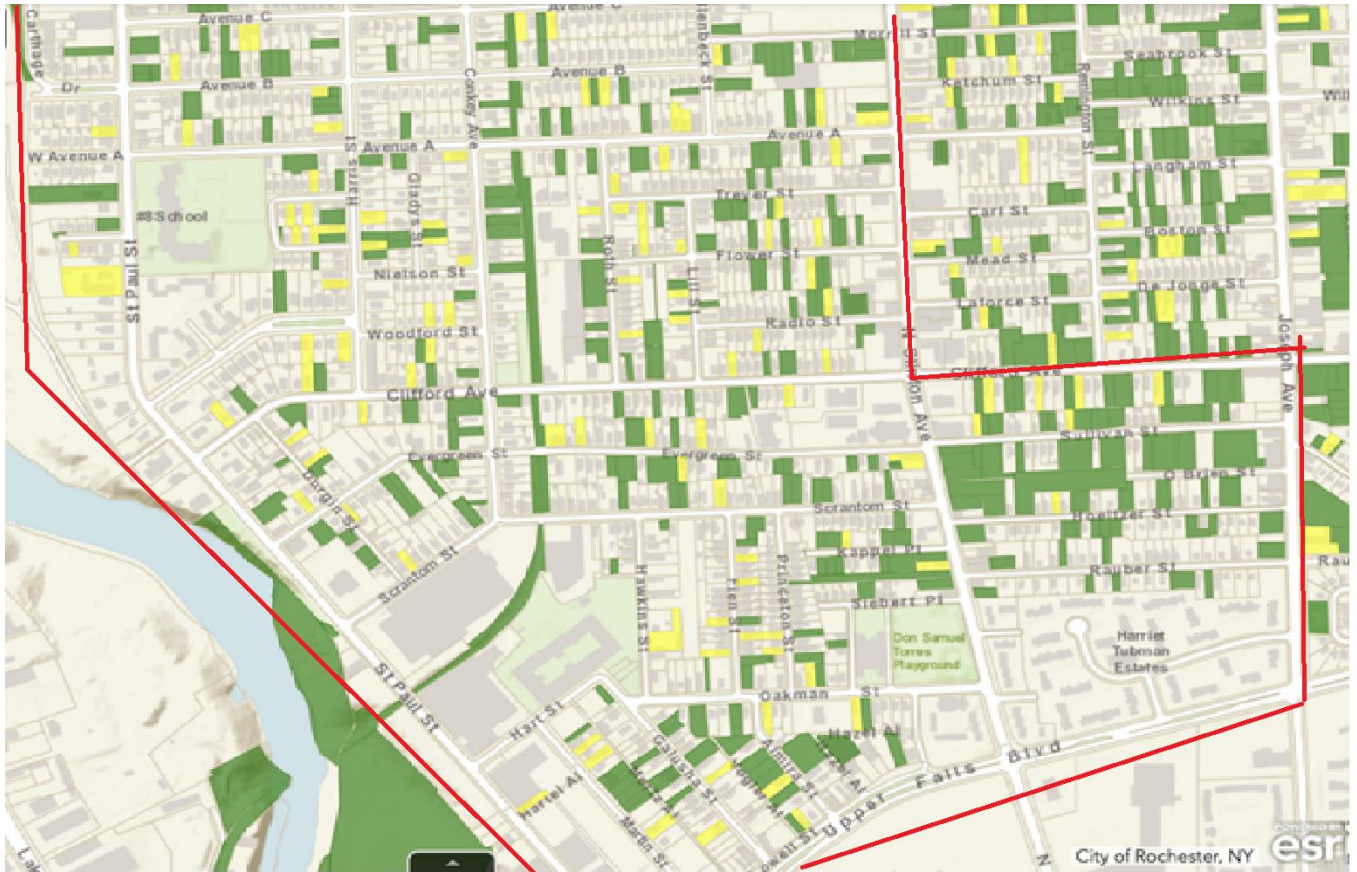
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Introduction

The El Camino neighborhood is situated in Northeast Rochester along Upper Falls Boulevard to the South, St. Paul to the West, Joseph to the East, and Avenue D to the North. This neighborhood has many assets including four City Parks (Lomb Memorial, Thomas R. Frey Trail at El Camino, Conkey Corner Park, Don Samuel Torres), two elementary schools (Roberto Clemente #8, Henry Lomb #20), one high school (All City High), strong neighborhood block clubs and associations, places of worship, and a variety of community agencies. While filled with resources, the El Camino neighborhood also faces challenges, including a pervasive open-air heroin market. Residents, community leaders, law enforcement, and others have identified vacant lots and buildings as places where individuals sell and use heroin. This paper describes and displays data related to vacant structures and lots in the neighborhood. The data presented is from the publicly accessible “Vacant Property Database” retrieved from www.cityofrochester.gov/maps/. The database is updated regularly and the data was retrieved on January 4, 2018.

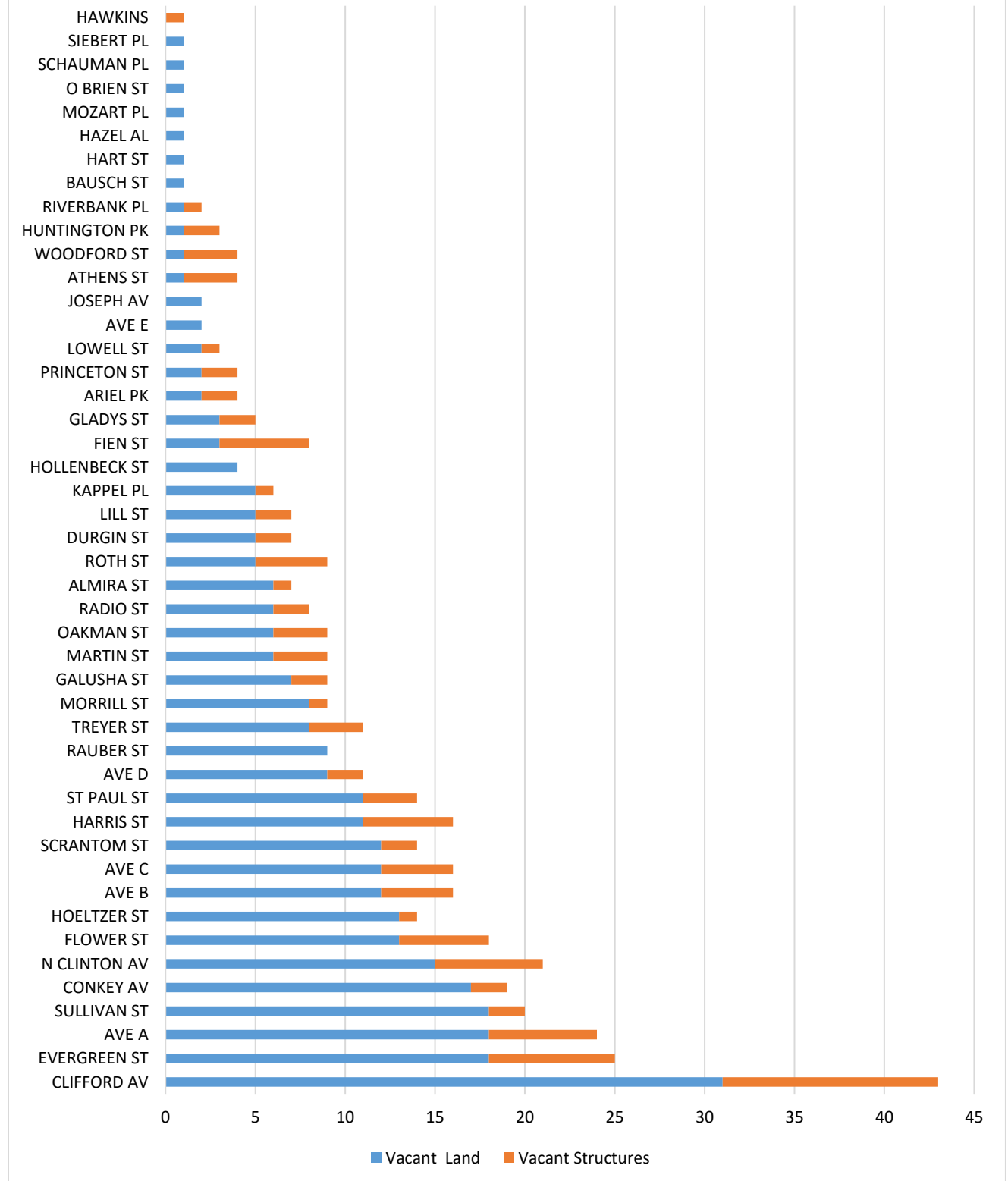
Findings

The map below is a screen shot from the City of Rochester Database of the vacant lots (in green) and vacant structures (in yellow) in the El Camino neighborhood. The target area is outlined in red below. Please note that in the map, due to screen size constraints, Avenue D is missing, but that the target area extends north to Avenue D.

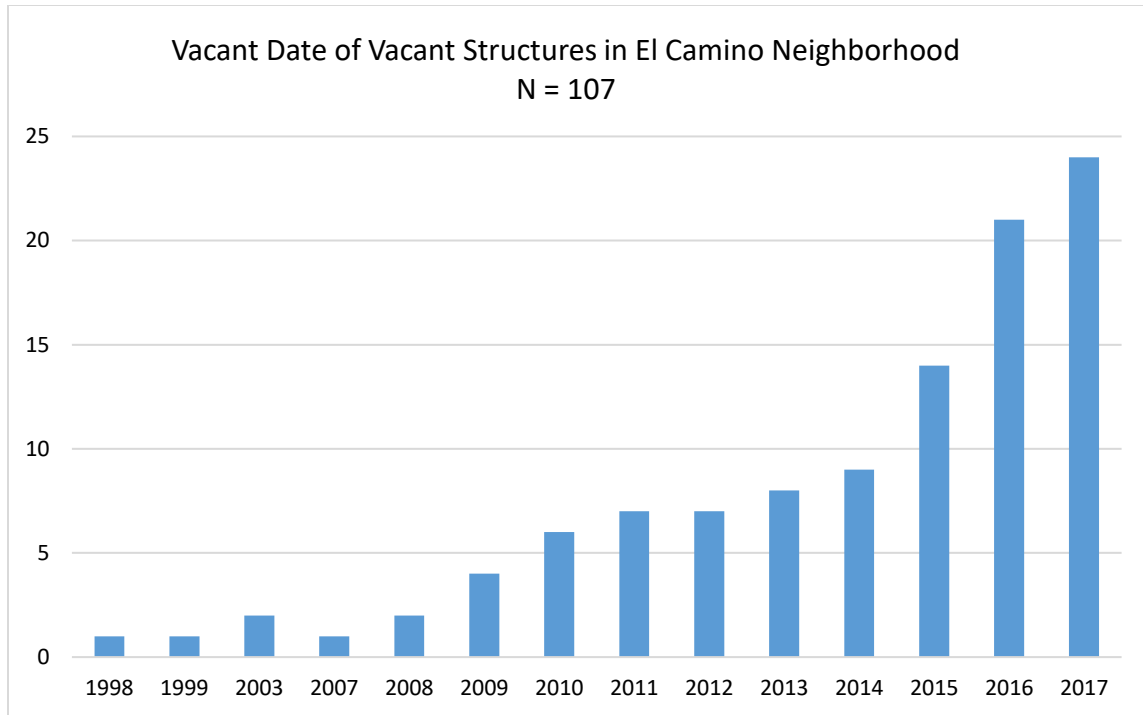


Location. The chart below shows the streets that vacant lots and structures in the El Camino neighborhood are located within. Overall, there are 107 vacant structures and 317 vacant lots. Within the target area, Clifford Avenue has the highest frequency of both vacant lots (31) and structures (12). Clifford Ave is one of the largest streets in the El Camino neighborhood. The other largest street in the neighborhood is North Clinton, and this has 15 vacant lots and six vacant properties. There are 46 streets with at least one vacant lot or structure, and 37 that have two or more vacant lots or structures. According to the Center for Public Safety Initiatives' count, there are 50 streets (including street, avenue, place, boulevard, park, alley, and plaza) in the target area. Based on this, 92% of the streets in the El Camino target area have at least one vacant lot or structure and 74% of streets have two or more vacant lots or structures. Further, 70% of the streets have at least one vacant structure present.

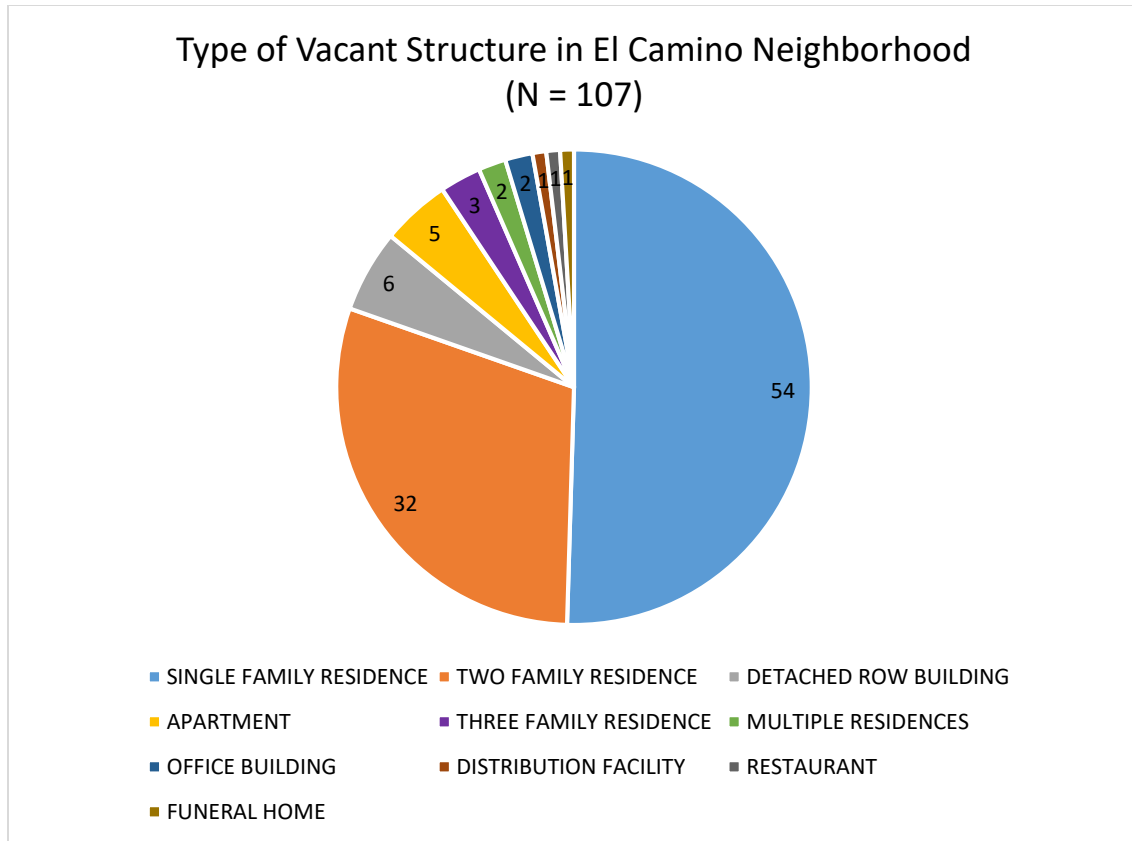
Location of Vacant Lots and Structures in El Camino Neighborhood (January 2018) (N = 424)



Vacant Date. Vacant dates are determined by the City to identify when structures are vacated. The chart below shows the number of properties deemed vacant (and still vacant) annually. Of the 107 vacant structures, 16% have been deemed vacant prior to 2011. As is expected, in the most recent years, more structures have been deemed vacant, with 24 in 2017 and 21 in 2016.



Type of Vacant Structure. The chart below illustrates the breakdown of type of structure that was deemed vacant. The most common type of vacant structure is a single-family residence followed by two-family residence. Combined, these two types of structures make up 80% of the total vacant structures in the El Camino neighborhood.



Discussion and Next Steps

In conclusion, there are a combined 424 vacant lots and structures in this neighborhood. This is the first step in a longer process of understanding and describing the physical make-up of the El Camino neighborhood. It will be useful to compare neighborhoods of similar sizes to identify if this neighborhood is distinctively different from others in terms of number, location, and/or types of vacant structures and lots. Individuals in the El Camino neighborhood have identified vacant buildings as places where heroin consumers will use heroin almost immediately after a drug sale. These buildings provide potential shelter from the elements, law enforcement, and the streets, but also can become hot spots for used needles, garbage, and prostitution. The impact on the neighborhood includes concerns for safety, witnessing overdoses and drug use, and blight. Some potential solutions include demolishing vacant buildings, selling buildings to residents at a low price, meeting with landlords, and creating gardens and/or places for play.