

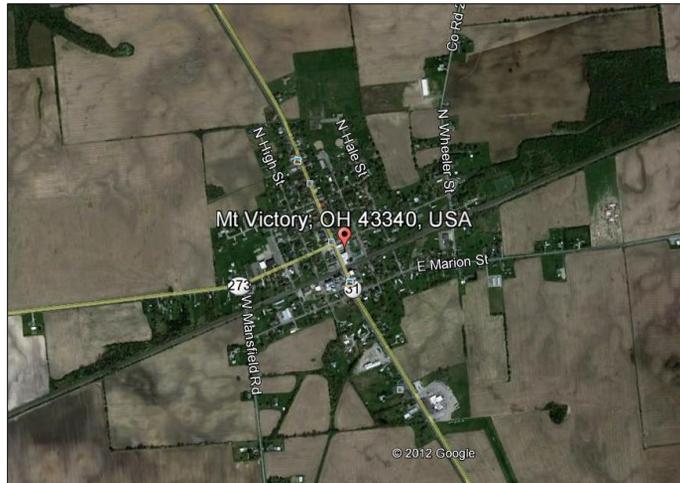
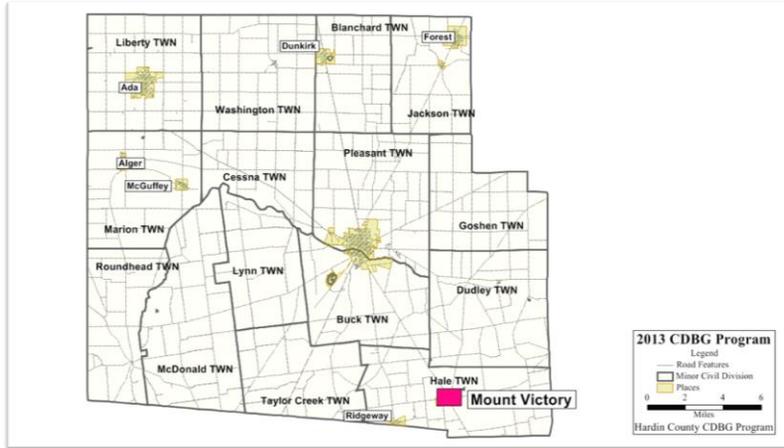
Neighborhood Revitalization Program

Village of Mount Victory
Hardin County, Ohio

Hardin County's Point of View

- For Hardin County, the flexibility a Neighborhood Revitalization Program provides to small communities is the key to its success.
- Other grant programs (OPWC, ODOT) focus funding on specific infrastructure problems.
- The Neighborhood Revitalization Program allows small communities to complete multiple projects.
- \$300,000 is not a lot of money in the grant world. However, for a small community, \$300,000 can do a lot of work that would not be otherwise affordable.
- The grants can help communities offset the costs of regulatory mandates.

The Village of Mount Victory



The Village of Mount Victory is one of Hardin County's Investment Areas. The County and Mount Victory conducted an income survey of the community and determined that the Village is 61.4% LMI.

Like many small communities, the Village is struggling to address its aging housing and infrastructure. Mount Victory's low incomes and small tax base lacks the revenue stream necessary to finance upgrades to its housing stock and public infrastructure.

A local committee assessing quality of life in the community identified these issues as a top priority.

Mount Victory is competing with Marysville and the Columbus Metropolitan area to attract and retain residents and businesses.

Prospective businesses ask questions about housing, infrastructure and community facilities, reinforcing the connection between these areas of community development.

Hardin County and Mount Victory have been working on infrastructure projects for several years:

- The Village received OPWC and CDBG funds in 2013 to replace waterlines throughout the community.
- The School District passed a school construction levy in 2012. Construction began in June 2014.

For the 2013 Neighborhood Revitalization Program, Mount Victory focused on ideas that would compliment these large projects:

- Improve quality of life and local “intangibles”
- Address projects the community could not afford

Mount Victory held community meetings with residents to discuss potential projects.

The Village used a mix of postcards, Facebook, and newspaper ads and articles to encourage resident participation. It also carried out a door to door survey of residents.

Top requests included: park/ community center improvements, sidewalk improvements, street and drainage improvements, general recreation improvements and a community garden. Other responses ranged from whimsical (a zoo and a water park) to insightful (the need for a grocery store and employment in Mount Victory). Residents emphasized the importance of recreation options, pointing out that aside from the ball diamonds, there are no facilities for organized play, forcing families and young adults to drive to Kenton or Marysville.

Residents discussed ideas during the meetings and agreed on several proposals:

- repairing the community center
- improving the Village Park
- repairing storm and sanitary sewers lines
- repairing sidewalks and streets
- developing gateways and landscaping along the main thoroughfares.

Residents evaluated projects and made recommendations:

For the park, they selected repairing the ball field lights and the basketball courts, and purchasing one major piece of play equipment.

For the community center, residents selected repairing the electrical and HVAC systems, and making the building ADA-accessible.

Village wide, Residents elected to address drainage, sanitary sewer and street signs.



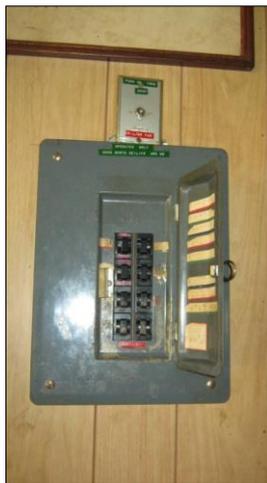
Community Center



Heating System



Electrical System



Bathrooms



Village Park Playground



Village Baseball Diamonds



Village Basketball Court



New Playground Equipment





Why do a Neighborhood Revitalization Program

Quality of Life

- Small Changes can make a big difference.
- Residents can see their ideas put into place.
- Can lead to ideas for additional projects and grants.
- Can complete projects otherwise cost prohibitive.
- \$300,000 can make a big difference in a small community.

Neighborhood Program Pros and Cons

- The application process is time consuming.
- It requires commitment by local officials.
- There is never enough money for all the proposed ideas.
- Limited funds can lead to or exacerbate local conflicts.
- Ideas of residents & local officials do not always mesh.
- It can be tough to get community& resident participation.

Community Feedback on the Neighborhood Program

- “We are a small community of about 960 people. The Village was able to complete projects on its wish list that it would otherwise never be able to afford.” (Village Administrator)
- “The neighborhood revitalization grant allowed us to improve . . . infrastructure that we would be unable to otherwise accomplish in an area of our city that has been neglected. I can see community support building in that area of our town . . . residents have indicated to me that this is an important part of seeing our city improve.” (City Official)

Community Feedback on the Neighborhood Program

- “. . . Somewhere in our preparation for this Neighborhood Grant, our city stopped grumbling about the past and we started to focus on the future. . . I truly feel that the biggest benefit was the realization by our residents that if we focus on a better tomorrow, ‘good things’ can happen.”
(City Mayor)

Community Feedback on the Neighborhood Program

- “The improvements have served as a catalyst in the village. Within a block of the park, four houses have under gone major remodels. Two houses for sale have been sold . . . Several vacant properties have been occupied. This renewed spirit has gathered momentum . . Even tourists comments to me have been overwhelmingly positive. My view is one of amazement & renewed optimism. The initial improvement of several key areas have truly spurred neighborhood revitalization at every level.”
(Village Mayor)