WHAT ARE THE URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY’S OBJECTIVES:

- To provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects.

- To ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement.

- To ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe and sanitary (DSS) housing is available within the displaced person’s financial means.

- To help improve housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing.

- To encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.
WHAT IS URBAN RENEWAL?

Urban renewal process improves and rehabilitates urban neighborhoods and areas. The renewal process can include demolishing old or run-down buildings and constructing new, up-to-date infrastructure generally for the purpose of persuading new development to boost the community’s economy.

HOW IS URBAN RENEWAL ACCOMPLISHED?

- Areas are identified within a city that meet the blighted criteria as defined by the Oklahoma State Statutes in §38-101. These areas are determined detrimental to the general welfare of the citizens of the city and arrest economic development.
- A resolution and ordinance are adopted by the City Council to establish an Urban Renewal Authority and begin the process following state law to remedy the areas of blight. On August 22, 2011, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 3882-A, which established the City of Muskogee Urban Renewal Authority, its membership, powers and authority.
- The City of Muskogee Urban Renewal Authority directed a Blight Study be performed. The Blight Study area consists of ninety acres in the Northwest corridor of the City. The Blight Study revealed a large portion of the area as overgrown with weeds and grass; peppered with dilapidated structures and personal property, and having a significant number of undeveloped parcels of raw land. The area was found to have inadequate water and sewer lines to serve the area along with inadequate street types and would not support development in accordance with the 2013 Future Land Use Map. The Blight Study, in its complete form will be a part of the Urban Renewal Plan. It was determined all of these issues combined make the area unusable in its present state for independent redevelopment without the Urban Renewal Authority and City of Muskogee intervention through the exercise of its powers under City Code, and Urban Renewal statutes under Oklahoma law.

URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT AREA:

Urban Renewal Project Area as adopted by the Urban Renewal Authority:

Beginning on the Southeast corner of 11th Street and Shawnee Avenue; thence East along Southerly edge of the Shawnee Avenue right-of-way to Chicago Street; thence South along the Westerly edge of Chicago Street right of way to Talladega Street; thence West along the Northerly edge of Talladega Street right-of-way to North 11th Street; thence North along the Easterly edge of 11th Street right-of-way to Shawnee Ave; back to the point of beginning.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR A PROJECT BY THE URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY:

- Establishment of the Urban Renewal Authority
- Establishment of an Urban Renewal Area
- A Blight Study to determine and confirm the area meets the guidelines as an appropriate Urban Renewal Area
- An Urban Renewal Plan prepared and officially adopted by the City Council, as it exists or is changed from time to time, for an urban renewal project.
- An Urban Renewal Project will then be initiated that may include undertakings and activities of the City, the Urban Renewal Authority, redevelopment corporation, person or other corporation, in an urban renewal area.

WHAT IS A “BLIGHTED AREA”?

Both City Code 80-130 (H) and 11 OKLA. STAT. §38-101(9) (2011) define a “Blighted Area” as:

An area in which there are properties, buildings, or improvements, whether occupied or vacant, whether residential or nonresidential, which by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces; population overcrowding; improper subdivision or obsolete platting of land, inadequate parcel size; arrested economic development; improper street layout in terms of existing or projected traffic needs, traffic congestion or lack of parking or terminal facilities needed for existing or proposed land uses in the area, predominance of defective or inadequate street layouts; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness; unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements; diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land; defective or unusual conditions of title; any one or combination of such conditions which substantially impair or arrest the sound growth of municipalities, or constitutes an economic or social liability, or which endangers life or property by fire or other causes, or is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, mortality, juvenile delinquency, or crime and by reason thereof, is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.

HOW DOES THE URBAN RENEWAL AREA AND PROJECT AFFECT PROPERTY OWNERS:

The Urban Renewal Project, for the elimination and for the prevention of the development or spread of blight, may involve clearance and redevelopment in the urban renewal area. Some of the undertakings may include;

1. Acquisition of a blighted area or portions thereof;
2. Demolition and removal of buildings and improvements;
3. Installation, construction or reconstruction of streets, off-street parking facilities, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other improvements necessary for carrying out the urban renewal objectives in the urban renewal plan;
4. Disposition of any property for uses in the urban renewal area or the leasing or retention of such property for uses in accordance with the urban renewal plan;
5. Carrying out plans for a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings or other improvements in accordance with the urban renewal plan; or
6. Acquisition of any other real property in the area where necessary to eliminate unhealthful, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, lessen density, eliminate obsolete or other uses detrimental to the public welfare, or otherwise to remove or prevent the spread of blight or deterioration, or to provide land for needed public facilities.