



Neighborhood Grants Program Graduate Highlights

Class of 2017

Table of Contents

Overview

02 List of 2017 Graduates

Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Neighborhood Implementation Graduates

03 Community Action Commission (dba Tri-County Community Action)

07 Cornerstone West Community Development Corporation

11 Nueva Esperanza (dba Esperanza)

14 People's Emergency Center

Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Neighborhood Planning Graduates

18 Chester County Economic Development Foundation

20 Impact Services Corporation

22 Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation

Wells Fargo Foundation Neighborhood Planning Graduates – National Pilot

25 Avenue Community Development Corporation

28 Change Happens! CDC

32 Children's Home Society of Washington

35 Homesight, Inc.

38 Strong City Baltimore/Central Baltimore Partnership

42 The Community Builders, Inc.

Graduates 2017

		Total Funded amount	Graduation
Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Neighborhood Implementation Grants			
Community Action Commission (dba Tri-County Community Action)	Harrisburg, PA	\$650,000	6/30/2017
Cornerstone West Community Development Corporation	Wilmington, DE	\$750,000	12/31/2017
Nueva Esperanza (dba Esperanza)	Philadelphia, PA	\$681,000	12/31/2017
People's Emergency Center	Philadelphia, PA	\$750,000	12/31/2017
Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Neighborhood Planning Grants			
Chester County Economic Development Foundation	Coatesville, PA	\$100,000	6/30/2017
Impact Services Corporation	Philadelphia, PA	\$100,000	9/30/2017
Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation	Philadelphia, PA	\$100,000	6/30/2017
Wells Fargo Foundation Neighborhood Planning Grants – National Pilot			
Avenue Community Development Corporation	Houston, TX	\$100,000	6/30/2017
Change Happens! CDC	Houston, TX	\$100,000	6/30/2017
Children's Home Society of Washington, Inc.	Seattle, WA	\$100,000	6/30/2017
Homesight, Inc.	Seattle, WA	\$100,000	6/30/2017
Strong City Baltimore/Central Baltimore Partnership	Baltimore, MD	\$90,000	6/30/2017
The Community Builders	Baltimore, MD	\$75,000	6/30/2017

Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Neighborhood Implementation Grant Graduates 2017



Community Action Commission dba Tri-County Community Action Harrisburg, PA

Approval Date: 10/27/2011

Graduation: 6/30/17

Project name: South Allison Hill Neighborhood Revitalization

Funded amount: \$650,000

Add'l Investment: \$47.7 million

Project description

Tri-County Community Action (TCCA) has strategically located, invested, and created stability in the South Allison Hill neighborhood of Harrisburg, PA. TCCA is reinvigorating and transforming this diverse community together with residents by developing innovative and interconnected strategies to bring the community into the vision of its residents:

a safe, thriving, and unified community where the full potential of the South Allison Hill community and residents will be realized. The South Allison Neighborhood Revitalization initiative increased community engagement, capacity for residents to lead their own initiatives, community redevelopment projects, and awareness of neighborhood activities to leverage additional public and private investments into the neighborhood.

South Alison Hill is the most densely populated neighborhood in Harrisburg in the cases of both business and residential concentrations. According to the American Community Survey 2011-2015, it is home to more than 6,000 residents. The South Allison Hill neighborhood is a diverse, low income, and vibrant community where Harrisburg's largest historic district of Victorian architecture and timeless craftsmanship is contained. Its population is diverse, consisting of African American (40%), White (31%), and identifying as some other race or two or more races (41%). Forty-one percent of residents are Hispanic.

Wells Fargo Regional Foundation funds supported the role of the Neighborhood Revitalization Manager, a portion of the Community Development Specialist salary, and direct program expenses for the CEED (Center for Employment, Education and Economic Development).

Outcomes

During the grant period, Tri-County Community Action and many agencies located in South Allison Hill experienced staff turnover and changes in executive leadership. New relationships have been formed and maintained, as the organization has historically held the belief that goals cannot be achieved alone and partnerships are valuable. Achievements include increased community engagement, expanded public safety efforts, enhanced appearance of the neighborhood, the

establishment of a county-wide illegal dumping task force, improved housing conditions, and amplified promotion of economic development opportunities. The organization has formally changed its name from Community Action Commission to the Tri-County Community Action.

Affordable housing activities

- Completed 13 new single family homes and rehabbed 9 houses.
- Removed 28 blighted properties.
- Held 39 homebuyer workshops for 200 participants.
- Provided 6 classes on weatherization and energy savings to 40 people.

Economic development activities

- Hosted business opportunity meetings with 10 businesses.
- Launched façade improvement program focused on Derry Street and Market Streets.
- Successfully advocated for the passage of the Keystone Opportunity Zone tax abatement.
- Increased participation of local businesses in Shop Small marketing campaign.
- Drafted zoning changes released to include improvements to the 17th street corridor.
- CEED job readiness program served 580 individuals in adult education services, with 297 individuals participating in GED/Adult Basic Education/ESL classes, and 14 people completing specialized certification.

Neighborhood building activities

- Engaged 73 community stakeholders and involved 42 community vendors in supporting community events.
- Held annual multicultural festival with 30 organizations and an average of 500 attendees, and several block parties with an average of 286 attendees.
- Designed leadership training program using the NeighborWorks America Community Leadership curriculum.
- Formed urban gardening committee and activated nine community gardens.
- Expanded number of crime watch groups and safety activities; installed cross walks to improve pedestrian safety.
- Led over 100 neighborhood cleanup activities engaging an average of 12 volunteers each, and 5 city-wide cleanups averaging 300 volunteers each.
- “ArtUP! South Allison Hill” helped beautify vacant and boarded up homes by creating murals for 29 windows and doors as well as a large retaining wall, involving over 600 residents in the visioning and 268 residents with painting and installation.
- Developed the “Heart of the Hill” community plan involving 700 residents.

Services to children and families

- Initiated Youth Build program with 32 youth enrolled.
- 12 Youth Build participants developed anti-violence event and racial justice training provided to 28 youth.

- Resident Association responsible for 10-15 youth involved in community projects during summer 2016.
- Established soccer league serving 39 youth.

Key Findings from comparative analysis of the Resident Satisfaction Surveys, administered in 2012 and again in 2016:

- The majority of residents say they are satisfied living in the neighborhood in 2016. Trends show that neighbors may be slightly less likely to strongly agree they would recommend the neighborhood, but also fewer neighbors are likely to strongly disagree they would recommend the neighborhood. Residents say the major reasons they live in the community are to be near friends and family, because they were born in the community and also because they enjoy the affordability of housing.
- Between 2012 and 2016, residents report that they speak with more neighbors on a regular basis. The things residents like best about their neighborhood in 2016 include their home or apartment, proximity to work, and their friends and family. This is similar to the things residents discussed in 2012. Crime and safety issues continue to be major concerns for residents.
- In 2016, about one-third of respondents own their homes, up from 22% in 2012.
- In 2016, access to public transportation and the friendliness of neighbors were among the highest rated quality of life aspects in the community. Between 2012 and 2016, several aspects saw increases in how they were rated. The quality of public services improved. In 2016, 50% say they agree or strongly agree public services are satisfactory or better. Despite safety in the community and cleanliness in the community being rated the lowest out of all quality of life aspects, each has improved significantly since 2012.
- Thinking about the last three years, fewer than one-third of respondents felt the neighborhood improved. Respondents were more optimistic when asked how the community is likely to change over the next three years and 40% feel it will improve.

Lessons learned

1. Partnerships with Faith Community are crucial to meeting program milestones.
2. “Champions” inside local and county governments are needed to help reach goals. When formalized processes become slow, asking a Board member or stakeholder to submit a letter on behalf of efforts can signify community interest and investment to elected officials who can become advocates and help speed up the process.
3. Community cleanups cannot succeed without rigorous implementation of anti-litter education and enforcement of illegal dumping.
4. Neighborhood plans and programs can be instrumental in forming regional efforts to address local problems by improving communication and mobilizing resources.
5. Media can be challenging. News about crime and violence is prevalent compared to positive news features. Share every positive story in your community.
6. Using ground rules for participation in neighborhood meetings establishes healthy boundaries and has an empowering effect on residents. When residents focus on what is possible instead of what is wrong, more is accomplished and challenges are more easily addressed.
7. Political campaigning provides a unique set of challenges and opportunities. The Commission cannot “be identified” with any candidate, yet is required to work closely with elected officials. Incumbent officials who are

running for re-election are in a gray area. Therefore, the Commission takes an accommodating stance when candidates wish to participate in our events without offering any official support.

8. Changes in personnel at the city require flexibility in meeting goals.
9. Treat residents as experts in their community. Give them the opportunity to share their ideas and experience from formation of a project or program through to the end. This creates pride and buy in. Civically engaged residents are the best public relations agents.
10. Make meetings actionable and respect people's time. People are more likely to keep coming back if they know action items are happening, and initiatives are moving forward and their time is well used.
11. Neighborhood revitalization cannot happen with only one organization; to truly build up the community everyone must be involved. Relationship building and strong partnerships are important.
12. In many cases, meetings are not the best way to engage with residents and stakeholders. It has been more successful to meet people where they are already congregating such as food banks, places of worship, community events and regular community programs.
13. Do not try to recreate the wheel, whatever project or initiative that you are thinking about implementing, chances are another community has done it or a similar project that you can learn from, which will make your project more successful in the end.
14. Beautification projects can become catalyst projects for the area immediately surrounding the project by showing neighbors change is possible.

Cornerstone West Community Development Corporation Wilmington, DE



Approval date:	10/31/2012
Graduation:	12/31/2017
Project name:	West Side Grows Together
Funded amount:	\$750,000
Add'l Investment:	\$116.9 million

Project description

West Side Grows Together is a comprehensive community and economic development initiative focused on the West Side of Wilmington, Delaware. The Foundation funded direct program expenses to support three critical positions to implement the plan and build neighborhood capacity including the Plan Implementation Manager, the Economic Development Manager and the Community Outreach Manager.

The West Side neighborhood is one square mile in size and shape and has a 21% poverty rate as compared to a 26% poverty rate in 2012. It is comprised of five sub-neighborhoods: Cool Springs, Tilton, Hilltop, the Flats, and Little Italy. With 12,500 residents, the West Side is home to some of the most economically, racially and socially diverse communities in the city and makes up 18% of Wilmington's total population. According to the American Community Survey 2012-2016, the West Side is predominately African American (46%), and has a large Hispanic population (28%). Along the southeast quadrant, 1 in 10 residents was born in a country other than the United States. Approximately 1 in 4 people that live in the West Side are below the age of 18, 36% of households are owned, and 18.3% of housing units are vacant.

The resident-driven Steering Committee continued beyond planning to provide oversight, technical assistance and direction to revitalization efforts. Cornerstone West CDC serves at the backbone organization for implementation activities focused on the following six areas highlighted in the neighborhood revitalization plan:

1. Community Building and Quality of Life
2. Youth
3. Housing
4. Economic Development
5. Transportation
6. Parks and Gardens

The project's ultimate vision is to improve the quality of life for West Side residents and to create a neighborhood where people want to put down roots and build a life.

Outcomes

Cornerstone West CDC worked to implement the West Side Grows Together revitalization plan and increased staff capacity, leveraged key partnership, engaged volunteers and developed leaders. Achievements include the development of

a sustained resident-driven collaborative which resulted in: empowered and engaged residents, increased public safety, renovated housing, stronger businesses, increased job opportunities, better transportation options, improved and activated parks and green space and additional opportunities for youth.

The initiative has significantly improved how institutions operate and communicate with each other within the West Side. Multiple communities of varying socio-economic and cultural backgrounds were brought together and co-invested, where formerly they would only focus on each of their own specific smaller areas, yielding heightened and sustained resident leadership. Further, the initiative has changed how government interacts with the community, as evidenced by a number of successful advocacy campaigns and increased city investment. Subsequently, West Side Grows Together has inspired and trained other communities to replicate the comprehensive, resident-driven revitalization model.

Affordable housing activities

- Successfully advocated for the establishment of the Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank for the City of Wilmington.
- Worked with Wilmington Housing Partnership to acquire one block of blighted properties to make into a mixed-use economic development and housing project.
- Demand for low-income rentals is being satisfied by 408 new units as part of “the Flats” multi-phase project, a \$129 million investment.
- Completed 6 new Cornerstone affordable homes.
- Funded 10 homeowner repairs along Fourth Street.

Economic development activities

- Successfully advocated for streetscape improvement recommendations from City totaling \$4 million.
- Installed security cameras for 15 businesses as part of crime prevention through environmental design initiative.
- Established 4th Street Visionaries who meet monthly and hold cleanups of commercial corridor.
- Secured Main Street Affiliation through Main Street America.
- Established an active business Alliance that serves 40 businesses.
- Organized 4 business marketing events per year resulting in 1,800+ visitors.
- Distributed newsletters to businesses bi-monthly.
- Working with First State Community Loan Fund, 3E Marketing Solutions and YWCA Delaware to provide technical assistance and capital to 13 small local businesses.
- Initiated the Launcher Entrepreneurship Program and graduated 39 entrepreneurs in year one.
- Averaging 15 new businesses per year in the West Side.
- Installed eight new planters.

Neighborhood building activities

- Hosted 450 events and activities for roughly 20,000 attendees.
- Developed 366 community leaders.
- Held 30 meetings for the 27-member Steering Committee.
- Created a social media presence with 1,600 “likes” and 830 “followers” on Instagram.
- Launched “West Side Stories”, a mixed-media communications strategy that exposes the stories of West Side

residents and groups (#westsidestories).

- Designed three new parks and renovated two existing parks, leveraging \$1.4 million.
- Established three "Friends of the Parks" groups.
- Maintained and expanded Rodney Reservoir Garden, serving 56 neighbors in 2018.
- Launched farmers market - over 1,500 people served by the farmers market each year.

Services to children and families

- Formed West Side Youth Providers Network and developed the Youth Resources Booklet, distributing 5,000 booklets to local community centers.
- Completed development of Youth Leadership Training program.
- Established a partnership with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to bring science and nature programming to West Side youth programs.
- Assisted in the development of the Summer Learning Collaborative, a partnership involving Teach for America teachers in designing and running summer camps at West End Neighborhood House and Latin American Community Center involving 600 children each summer.
- Achieved goal of launching the new Antonia Alonso School serving 415 bilingual students and supported the establishment of the Freedom School that serves 110 youth each year.

Key Findings from comparative analysis of the Resident Satisfaction Surveys, administered in 2011 and again in 2017;

- Overall, residents generally feel satisfied living in the community. Levels of satisfaction have ticked downward between 2011 and 2017, where fewer respondents say they would recommend the neighborhood as a good place to live and fewer respondents say they are satisfied. Compared with 2011, fewer respondents felt they would continue to live in the neighborhood if they were given a choice.
- There remains a strong sense of community in the West Side Neighborhood. The vast majority of respondents continue to report they speak with their neighbors regularly. Over half of respondents also agreed that neighbors would work together to fix problems in the neighborhood. Friendliness of neighbors remained one of the highest rated quality of life aspects in both 2011 and 2017.
- In 2017, 41% of respondents own their home, 50% rent their home, and 8% neither own nor rent their home.
- Safety is a major concern in the community. It is the lowest rated quality of life aspect in 2017 with fewer than a quarter of respondents rating safety "good" or "very good." Safety ratings also declined from 2011 to 2017.
- Access to transportation is rated highest with over three-quarters of respondents rating it as "good" or "very good." Despite the high rating, even access to transportation saw slight declines in ratings between 2011 and 2017.
- Few respondents felt the neighborhood has improved. Only 3 in 10 respondents felt the neighborhood has "improved some" or "improved a lot" over the last three years. Respondents were more optimistic about the future of the neighborhood where the majority respondents say it will "improve some" or "improve a lot" over the next three years.

Lessons learned

1. Partnership and collaborations are a must for a can-do organization like West Side Grows Together. Making genuine connections with partners is time-consuming but necessary.
2. Establishing specialized groups like “Friends of Parks” has made a significant difference in getting people involved in taking pride in their community.
3. There is no such thing as a failure in working with West Side Grows Together. It is always a learning experience.
4. Integrity is everything in working with a community. It is critical to be genuine and to follow through on commitments.
5. The focus of the staff supporting revitalization efforts needs to be in response to what the community sees as important.
6. If community development efforts are strong, the work can weather the storms of the changing political landscape. Community development efforts should not be dependent on one government administration.
7. Violence in the neighborhoods has the potential to undermine progress being made in so many areas.
8. Although West Side has three active civic associations, their effectiveness is sometimes limited not because of the dedication of the residents, but because they have not been trained in residential leadership, they tend to be reactive instead of proactive. Strong systems need to be put in place to promote accountability.
9. Messaging and Marketing - one voice. Bringing the communities together, we were able to communicate with one voice to attract investors and to communicate effectively with the City and State.
10. Embracing and utilizing the neighborhood plan as if it was your own organization’s plan – a concept of working together verses competing – is a huge shift but was critical in order to implement the plan. As a larger group and coalition of 5 communities, we were not only able to increase dialogue with government and institutions, but we were able to partner with them to achieve win-wins.
11. Do not underestimate neighborhood identity and sensitivity. We learned the importance of listening to our community building relationships, building trust, tackling low hanging fruit, demonstrating the value add, being responsive, and being sensitive. When working with a range of people, from various backgrounds, the foundation of respect is supreme.
12. Political will and how grassroots work supports getting external actors to act. We learned that community development is a battle. When renovating the parks in the West Side, it took a change in administration to garner the political will to push the project forward after several years of stalled progress. It was our network that was crucial at putting pressure on the influencers and in recognizing and appreciating wins as well.
13. Having the flexibility to prototype and incubate ideas. A lot of the work we do is prototyping. We must be willing to take risks and course correct. The Wells Fargo commitment invested in our staff and in our capacity so that we were able to be creative.



Nueva Esperanza, Inc. (dba Esperanza)

Philadelphia, PA

Approval Date: 10/28/2012

Graduation: 12/31/17

Project name: Hunting Park Strategic Plan 2022

Funded Amount: \$681,000

Add'l Investment: \$27.8 million

Project description

The vision of the neighborhood revitalization initiative is to transform Hunting Park into a destination and model neighborhood by empowering its people and fostering community engagement, economic and physical development and education. Foundation funds supported a full-time Education and Community Development Manager; a communication infrastructure for the sharing of data among members of the Hunting Park Collaborative including marketing, website launch and maintenance, meetings and database licensing; the development of the NeighborCare Team program and events; commercial corridor and economic development events; and administrative costs.

Over the course of the past 30 years, Nueva Esperanza (Esperanza) has been working to restore *hope* in the neighborhoods surrounding its institutional campus. In leading a neighbor-driven revitalization process, Esperanza engaged community serving organizations and more than 700 residents in the creation of the Hunting Park Strategic Plan 2022 which focused on three core strategies:

1. Economic Development: Enable residents and business owners to combat poverty and disinvestment in order to make their neighborhood a local destination.
2. Community Development & Education: Cultivate and empower residents and business owners in accessing the resources they need and create the change they want to see.
3. Real Estate Development: Build assets through residential and commercial real estate development.

The initiative primarily focused in the North Philadelphia neighborhood of Hunting Park and stretches east into the Feltonville area. The estimated population is approximately 13,378 residents. Of those, 47% are currently living in poverty and the median income is \$21,894. Residents of this area are primarily Hispanic (65%). Racially, the area identifies itself as African American (33%), White (22%), Multiracial (7%), and Other (38%). The population served is relatively young with nearly 34% of the residents under the age of 18 according to the 2010 Census.

Outcomes

Esperanza involved key community stakeholders in the development of the plan and the formation of the Hunting Park Community Collaborative to drive implementation activities. Achievements include substantial block level improvements, increased quality housing, and transformation of business corridors through streetscape improvements.

Affordable housing activities

- Transformed the Roberto Clemente Building into 38 affordable housing units for low income families.
- Established home repair program that has improved 20 homes in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.
- Received a predevelopment grant from LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) to fund design services for the mixed-use development of 8 additional units of affordable housing.

Economic development activities

- Provided technical assistance to an average of 40 organizations per year.
- Completed 18 business façade improvements with an additional 5 currently in progress and more in the pipeline.
- Launched Wyoming Avenue corridor association, with streetscape planning underway.
- Installed 100 corridor banners.
- Created and distributed business directory.

Neighborhood building activities

- NeighborCare Team Program awarded 159 grants totaling \$80,000 that impacted 100 unique blocks with 16,000 residents, and actively engaged nearly 2,000 residents and resulted in a now cleaner, safer and beautiful neighborhood.
- Partnered with TreePhilly and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Tree Tenders program to plant more than 700 yard trees to create a greener and healthier community.
- In partnership with PHS, Esperanza created the first ever bilingual Tree Tenders training, forming a group of 35 trained community members for street tree plantings. The volunteers planted 15 trees in the Spring and will plant 30 more in November.
- Hosted 78 events, workshops, competitions, etc. attracting over 11,400 people. Roughly 37% (29 events) focused on science and engaged 5,200 people.
- Added 18 new Town Watch blocks by providing specialized training to community volunteers on how to keep their block safe and how to report crime.
- Community directory created and distributed. Community newsletter issued quarterly, and community website developed.

Services to children and families

- Responded to the community's increased interest in STEM education activities by adding a position to support STEM program activities and the Hunting Park Community Science Network (one of only two science networks in the Philadelphia area).

Comparative results from the community surveys of 2011 and 2017 show an increase in community satisfaction and perception of safety with 13% more residents stating that safety has improved in the past three years than in 2011, and 73% of survey takers stating that they would still live in the community if they had the choice, compared to only 51% in

2011. Crime has been reduced in 6 of 9 categories identified as major indicators by the City of Philadelphia Police Department. Today, renters are more likely to buy a home in Hunting Park than in 2011. Vacancy on the 5th Street commercial corridor has been reduced by half and a large percentage of businesses on 5th Street and Wyoming Avenue have either completed façade improvements or are in the process of doing so. All but one of the NeighborCare Team blocks have the two lowest litter indexes according to a study by the City of Philadelphia. Visually, the community is more vibrant, clean, and welcoming than it was before the implementation of the plan. In terms of collaborations, Esperanza now runs one of the only two science networks in the city, and count on strong collaborations through the Hunting Park Community Collaborative. These collaborations were nonexistent before the implementation of the plan.

Lessons learned

1. Sometimes less is more. Initial plans were to hold monthly Family Fun Events. After experiencing a drop in attendance, the decision was made to host larger quarterly events in different parts of the neighborhood. This change in direction has resulted in greater attendance and greater impact for both partners and residents.
2. Effective collaboration requires clear structure and responsibilities. Through the development of the HPCC, additional efforts were needed to stabilize membership. By adding structure, clarifying responsibilities and providing training, organizations are seeing a positive impact on the collaborative.
3. Effective community development requires an inclusive environment. Understanding the neighborhood, its needs and its challenges, is very important to creating an inclusive environment during the implementation process. An inclusive environment for Hunting Park includes making every event, workshop and promotion bilingual for the Spanish-speaking neighbors to have access to community resources. English and Spanish materials summarizing Wells Fargo's services would be ideal to share with community and clients.
4. Neighbors owning change has been the main source of success. The people are a critical asset within the neighborhood. By focusing on neighbors and their ability to create change, implementation of the neighborhood plan has experienced a significant increase in support and engagement. Neighbors are moving the plan forward.
5. It is OK to be flexible during the implementation. Through the process of implementation, certain deliverables were deemed not feasible within the timeline, or were in conflict with the interests of key stakeholders. The overall themes and goals never changed, but periodic evaluation can help inform the activities necessary for effective and efficient implementation.
6. Lead by example. The ability to have conversations with funders and stakeholders while also becoming a partner with community is essential of community development staff. Staff navigate the delicate balance of actively participating in projects while supporting the efforts of the community in order to build an informed, engaged and confident community.
7. NeighborCare Projects: the time and logistics involved in awarding Neighbor Care Team projects was much, much, much greater than originally anticipated. Ultimately, the projects have been implemented smoothly. However, reserving additional time, for when things do not go as planned, throughout each step of the process is important. Furthermore, setting aside time for outcome tracking is something that must be considered when designing the overall project.
8. Metrics and Milestones: the community building process necessary to successfully implement many milestones takes longer than originally anticipated.
9. It is important to both engage multiple partners in different ways and to allow the community members the opportunity to learn from each other.



People's Emergency Center

Philadelphia, PA

Approval Date: 12/31/2012

Graduation: 12/31/17

Project name: Make Your Mark!

Lower Lancaster Revitalization

Funded Amount: \$750,000

Add'l Investment: \$17.5 million

Project description

In West Philadelphia, People's Emergency Center (PEC) along with community residents created the "*Make Your Mark! Lower Lancaster Revitalization Plan*" which details the community's vision to create safe, healthy, distinct neighborhoods that are home to diverse, engaged residents and connected by a revitalized Lancaster Avenue that serves as a commercial main street, cultural corridor and gathering place. Lancaster Avenue connects diverse neighborhoods such as Belmont, Mantua, Mill Creek, West Powelton, Powelton Village and Saunders Park. The commercial corridor is located between 34th and 48th street, bordering Drexel University and only blocks away from the University of Pennsylvania. The neighborhood is one square mile, has a population of 19,276 residents and a poverty rate of 52%. Residents in the area are primarily African American (81%) with the remainder consisting of White (10%), Asian (4%), and Hispanic (3%) people.

The multi-faceted work led by PEC's Community Development Corporation involves investing in people and place. Through strategic investments that leverage the community's assets and stakeholder resources, this project seeks to improve the quality of life for residents, and to initiate a broader transformation to improve area parks, schools, housing and the commercial corridor. The goals of the project were to empower residents as agents of change; strengthen connections across traditional neighborhood boundaries; ensure that the revitalization of Lower Lancaster benefits all residents regardless of income; celebrate the rich heritage of the area through arts and culture; transform Lancaster Avenue into a unique and vibrant commercial corridor; and coordinate the efforts of city agencies.

WFRF's grant supported salaries including a Marketing Director, materials and program costs, and overhead expenses.

Outcomes

PEC and its numerous community partners have worked to stay true to the neighborhood plan while also incorporating innovative programming which includes Action for Early Learning, Criminal Expungement Clinics, Men's Coffee Talks, Lancaster Avenue Jazz and Arts Festival and Neighborhood Time Exchange. PEC continues to provide support and technical assistance to zoning meetings or decision making processes for individual organizations.

Affordable housing activities

- Created 45 new units of affordable housing.
- Assisted more than 100 homeowners with façade repair.

- Provided informational seminars and technology classes, with over 1,000 people attending financial literacy, credit repair assistance, or homeownership workshops.

Economic development activities

- Launched the Financial Opportunity Center.
- Expanded membership base and lending capacity for the Lancaster Avenue 21st Century Business Association.
- Installed 38 bike racks on Lancaster Avenue.
- Helped bring 89 new jobs to Lancaster Avenue.
- Launched www.lancasteravephilly.com.
- Sponsored monthly “Second Friday” events along Lancaster Avenue, encouraging businesses to stay open late and exhibit local artists.

Neighborhood building activities

- Designated a federal Promise Zone in 2014 and Promise Neighborhood in 2016.
- Held quarterly community service briefing, special events and projects through Neighborhood Advisory Committee.
- Published monthly print newsletter.
- Implemented the Community Connectors Program, with over 175 Connectors coordinating over 200 “Drop Spots”, distributing 48,000 newsletters, interacting with over 6,300 neighbors, and staffing at over 100 community events.
- Launched neighborhood text messaging system, with over 300 subscribers.
- Assisted with the creation of the West Belmont Civic Association.
- Helped Belmont neighbors create community green space at Brooklyn and Ogden Streets.
- Collaborated with Public Workshop to design product prototypes to inspire increased civic engagement and activate a new community space at 42nd and Lancaster Avenue.
- Hosted the annual Lancaster Avenue Jazz and Arts Festival in Saunders Park with average 3,000 people in attendance.
- Developed LoLa 38 as a creative placemaking project which utilized inactive parking lots for arts programming.
- Launched the Neighborhood Time Exchange, an artist residency hub at 4017 Lancaster Avenue which led to the implementation of over 80 community-led projects.
- Negotiated a Community Benefits Agreement with Drexel University and Wexford Science Center in regards to the redevelopment of the University City High School site.
- Built new playground to activate vacant lot at 41st and Lancaster Avenue.
- Hosted annual spring cleanup with average of 100 residents participating.

Services to children and families

- Engaged over 500 at-risk youth.
- Promoted the importance of high quality early childhood education and increased percentage of children in high-quality child care through Action for Early Learning programs.

- Provided free fitness workouts to 650 residents.
- Distributed food to 4,000 neighborhood residents annually through the PEC's weekly food cupboard.
- Provided over 600 individuals free and confidential legal advice through PEC's weekly Criminal Expungement Clinics (services provided by Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity).
- Distributed over 1,250 computers and provided over 100,000 training hours to more than 3,000 low-income residents.
- Hosted monthly men's coffee talks with an average of 15 participants per month.

Key Findings from comparative analysis of the Resident Satisfaction Surveys, administered in 2011 and again in 2017.

- In both years there is a high level of satisfaction in the neighborhood and a vast majority of respondents say they would recommend the neighborhood as a good place to live. There is an increase between 2011 to 2017 of those who say they would continue to live in the neighborhood if given a choice.
- The neighborhood has a strong sense of community and some indicators show it has strengthened between 2011 and 2017.
- In 2017, 35% of respondents own their home while 52% rent and 12% neither rent nor own. Of those that do not own their home, just over half say they would be interested in purchasing a home in the community.
- In 2017, neighborhood amenities tend to rate highest among a variety of aspects that impact quality of life in the community including access to transportation, the variety of goods and services in the community, the quality of public services, and access to employment. The quality of life aspects that tend to rate lower in 2017 include cleanliness in the community, the physical conditions of homes, sidewalks, streets, and public space, housing affordability, and safety in the community.
- Despite many physical aspects in the community being rated lowest in 2017, there were positive changes in how these aspects were rated between 2011 and 2017. The neighborhood also saw positive improvement in access to employment, the variety of goods and services in the community, quality of public services, friendliness of neighbors, physical conditions of streets, sidewalks, and public spaces, physical condition of homes, and affordability of homes or apartments.
- In 2017 nearly two-thirds of respondents felt the neighborhood had improved over the last three years. Respondents were more optimistic about the next three years with about three-quarters of respondents feeling the neighborhood would improve.

Lessons learned

1. Use the neighborhood plan as a living document. It is important to continually assess the changing circumstances and the needs of the community in order to strategically respond to shifting public support, limited capital funds, and capacity issues.
2. Advocacy for existing residents. With extensive investments being made in West Philadelphia, efforts must continue to include advocating for access to affordable housing for existing residents and for additional programs to address socio-economic disparities as a high percentage of residents continue to live below the poverty line (49%), do not have a high school diploma (29.7%), and are unemployed (21%).

3. Be aware of shifting demographics. Over the last ten years, the African American population decreased by 16% while White and Asian populations have increased significantly. It is important to facilitate community building between long-established residents and newer neighbors.
4. Start small with surveys. Rather than start with an “all hands on deck” approach, it would have been better to determine which data collectors are able to administer this work in the most effective and efficient way and then provide those individuals with support. It would have enabled staff to address any confusing questions and possibly saved time that was needed to enter, analyze, and clean data.
5. Always do a thorough check for scheduling conflicts when scheduling a community meeting.

Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Neighborhood Planning Grant Graduates 2017



Chester County Economic Development Foundation

Coatesville, PA

Approval Date: 1/27/16

Graduation: 6/30/17

Project name: Coatesville Growing Greater
Neighborhood Plan

Number of residents participating: 500

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: Urban Partners

Project description

To support the creation of a ten-year, resident driven, comprehensive neighborhood plan for downtown Coatesville and its surrounding neighborhoods. Foundation funds were used to support the work of the planning consultant, program staff directly related to the planning process, and the costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Surveys.

Downtown Coatesville is a 1.18 square mile area that is home to just over 9,000 residents. It is largely residential with 34.8% of neighbors living below the poverty line as compared to 7.1% for the county. Residents in the neighborhood are 53% African American, 26% Latino, and 21% White. Few residents in the area hold a bachelor's degree (12%) as compared to the county average of 50%, and unemployment in the neighborhood (12.5%) outpaces the county average of 5%. Approximately 66.3% of Coatesville renters experience housing cost burden as compared to 49.5% for the county.

The planning process was overseen by a Steering Committee comprised of 15 members including nonprofits and residents. Major stakeholders in the planning process included the Chester County Economic Development Foundation (CCEDF), Coatesville Area Partners for Progress (CAPP), Chester County Economic Development Council (CCEDC), the County of Chester, Coatesville 2nd Century Alliance, and the City of Coatesville. Supportive neighborhood organizations included the Brandywine Health Foundation (BHF), Coatesville Housing Authority (CHA), Coatesville Police Department, Coatesville Area School District, Coatesville Youth Initiative (CYI), and the Western Chester County Chamber of Commerce (WCCCC).

Activities

At the heart of the Coatesville Growing Greater planning effort was resident and stakeholder engagement. The public outreach strategy included the use of public meetings and visioning workshops, focus group meetings, stakeholder interviews, a website (CoatesvilleGrowingGreater.org), and a social media campaign using Facebook. The Growing Greater Steering Committee coordinated a team of surveyors to complete 308 resident surveys. In all, the survey team knocked on the doors of approximately 1,200 homes in the study area soliciting input. To better understand the physical nature of the neighborhood and housing quality, a team of volunteers from the Chester County Department of Community

Development conducted an inventory of the physical conditions of all 2,841 properties within the Study Area, 81.7% of which are residential properties.

Four major categories of focus were identified:

1. **Resident Engagement** strategies include holding small-scale, neighborhood festivals and mini-parades, sponsoring family-oriented, block-level competitions, creating and maintaining a community calendar/bulletin board, sponsoring positive communications, organizing block groups into neighborhood associations, creating a homebuyer campaign and incentives, and financial literacy classes for residents.
2. **Jobs/Economic Opportunity** strategies include expanding training to youth and chronically unemployed, entrepreneurship programs, and advocating for expanded public transportation availability.
3. **Youth Empowerment** plan calls for a comprehensive review, culling, and marketing strategy for all existing programs.
4. **Community Safety** strategies include launching a network of block watch groups, creating a Coatesville Ambassadors program, improving maintenance of nuisance properties through code enforcement, improved communications among residents, stakeholders and police, and improved lighting and roadway markings.

In addition, the plan presents strategies to encourage, promote, and subsidize home ownership.

Lessons learned

1. Identifying roles of primary partners at the outset is critical. It is most efficient and productive to have one responsible party for managing the process on the ground.
2. Everything takes longer than you think.
3. Community engagement requires a consistent effort.
4. Have multiple strategies in place for collecting surveys. This is the most challenging part of the project. To get a better response on the surveys, experimented with changing start times and end times and the days of the week for knocking on residents' doors. Also, landlords were contacted to assist with resident introductions. Utilized social media for outreach for more volunteers and reviewed incentives for the residents and volunteers. Local organizations were pulled in to recruit known advocates to help break down resident barriers.
5. Winter months are not the ideal season for collecting surveys.
6. Traditional large- setting public meetings do not always attract residents in your target community. Smaller meetings pulling from various focus groups work better to obtain stakeholder input.
7. Ensure the planning group has a broad, expansive stakeholder base with additional neighborhood agencies and more residents involved from the beginning.
8. Identify a single, strong convener/facilitator to monitor all milestones and timelines.
9. Flexibility is important when working with a large team, multiple deliverables, and an ultimate deadline. Flexibility is also important when dealing with personnel changes.
10. Effective communication has been the key to productive meetings with the stakeholders, residents, task forces, and the Steering Committee. Open communication with all stakeholders and residents is crucial to instilling confidence and to enacting the action strategies for the priority concerns.

Impact Services Corporation

Philadelphia, PA

Approval Date: 1/27/16

Graduation: 9/30/16

Project name: Heart of Kensington Collective Impact 2022

Number of Residents Participating: 509

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: Interface Studios



Project description

To support the creation of a ten-year, resident-driven, comprehensive, neighborhood plan for the Heart of Kensington (HOK) community. Grant funding paid for the neighborhood planning consultants with the remainder covering staff time costs, and the costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Surveys.

The “Heart of Kensington” (HOK) neighborhood of Eastern North Philadelphia is one of the most challenged parts of the city, ridden by blight, crime and drug activity with 54% of residents living below the poverty line. The population is very dense with over 40,000 people living in an approximately 0.56 square-mile area. HOK is the epicenter of the opioid crisis in Philadelphia. This intense dynamic recently compelled Impact to re-evaluate its approach, and to apply a “Trauma-Informed” lens to the work.

A 53-member Steering Committee guided and provided feedback on all aspects of the planning process. The group was comprised of local residents, community leaders, community development organizations and local government representatives. Major stakeholders were Esperanza Health Center, Hispanic Community Counseling Services, local businesses on Kensington Avenue, Prevention Point, local faith groups, Park Friends Groups (McPherson, Harrowgate, Hope), West Kensington Neighbor’s Association, Harrowgate Civic, Goodlands Coalition, KICA, K&A Business Association, LISC, New Kensington CDC, HACE, and representatives from the City of Philadelphia’s Police Department, Commerce Department, and Managing Director’s Office.

Activities

Assessments included a parcel-by-parcel survey of every property in the neighborhood and a GIS parcel-by-parcel mapping of land use, block condition and vacancy data; an examination of the physical environment to assess the existing public spaces, neighborhood anchors, the quality of the natural environment, local traffic and circulation patterns, the transit system, and other amenities; analysis of demographic and socioeconomic changes within the community; and a review of historic maps and photographs as well as prior planning documents. Outreach included administration of the Resident Perceptions Survey with 364 surveys collected. Focus groups were held with youth and opioid recovery clients, and two public forums were convened, as well as local civic association meetings.

Residents, stakeholders, and partners prioritized needs and defined components of a healthy community in Kensington in the areas of:

1. **Health and Safety** - Strategies focus on addressing the effects of the opioid epidemic within the community including preventing overdose deaths and supporting drug-addicted residents in recovery; improving police and community relations and developing a collaborative, problem-solving approach to opioid issues; and stabilizing and activating vacant lots and parks;
2. **Education** – Strategies focus on promoting a culture that values education as a means for personal and community advancement and providing programming in schools that supports parents beyond school-related issues and creating a community hub/one-stop-shop for parents;
3. **Economic Development** – strategies center on attracting new local jobs to the neighborhood and cultivating the entrepreneurial spirit in Kensington; improving the skillset of local residents so they can find available work and creating opportunities for residents to avoid the drug trade or to transition out of it;
4. **Housing** – strategies focus on increasing the supply of long-term affordable housing units and increasing the number of homeowners in the neighborhood; and
5. **Community** - strategies focus on improving public gathering spaces so residents have a place to interact; promoting opportunities for community engagement; launching a campaign for a Cleaner Neighborhood; and developing a messaging campaign to re-shape narrative around Kensington.

Targeted strategies and tactics are also focused in five geographic “focus zones” recognizing that specific parts of the neighborhood require specific solutions.

The overall plan implementation budget is \$74.3 million with \$62.5 million in capital costs and \$11.9 million in non-capital costs. Early implementation activities include a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design project which has stabilized blighted vacant lots, with residents using the lots for green and play space, as well as barbeques.

Lessons learned

1. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is as much a people-based strategy as it is a place-based strategy. This has great potential for Kensington and similar neighborhoods where vacant/abandoned/blighted spaces have multiple negative effects (e.g., drug sales and dumping) and conversely appear to have multiple positive effects (e.g., beautification and drug sale disruption).
2. Over-communicating intention is a good strategy for increased buy-in from stakeholders.
3. We have been told “we don’t want any more dot meetings”. We will find creative methods to engage stakeholders during meetings rather than solely utilizing stick-on-dots on a neighborhood map.
4. Planning is in and of itself a great iterative learning process that is challenging our ideas related to community development and collaboration.
5. Recruit surveyors from an educational institution, or as part of a mentoring or job training program, so they have a personal motivation to participate and guarantee a level of professionalism.
6. Look at local civic groups’ monthly meeting schedules when planning the community engagement process; plan to take the planning meetings to the civic groups, which requires coordination with local leadership, additional hours from consultants, and also overtime for staff.



Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation Philadelphia, PA

Approval Date: 1/27/16

Graduation: 9/30/17

Project name: Chinatown Neighborhood Plan

Number of Residents Participating: 1,300

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: Interface Studios

Project description

To create a new ten-year neighborhood revitalization plan for Chinatown. Grant funds paid for a planning consultant, for staff time, and for costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Survey.

Chinatown is a growing community of approximately 8,300 residents (immigrants are historically undercounted) in 2.5 square miles. Approximately 27.8% of residents live in poverty. Asians make up 35% of the community, along with 43% White and 26% African Americans. Diversity has increased considerably in recent years. Initially, PCDC focused solely on “Chinatown Proper” since it is hemmed in on all sides by hard boundaries. In recent years its focus expanded to include “Chinatown North” which is north of the Vine Street Expressway. Also known as the “Callowhill” or “Loft District”, this area has long been neglected, but is now rapidly developing and gentrifying due to its proximity to Center City and the market forces that are pushing northward. The rapidly increasing bifurcation of Chinatown residents has resulted in a significant number of extremely low-income households earning under \$20,000 per year. Rapidly increasing property values present challenges to these populations as they face high rent burdens, increasing property taxes, and an evolving mix of retail types which may not be accessible to them.

Major stakeholders that participated in the planning process included business owners, community service providers, local community members who participate or volunteer in institutions, and a diverse representation of residents, workers, and community members.

Activities

Assessments included: inventory of current land uses and vacancies; inventory of sidewalk conditions; observation of neighborhood built environment conditions; inventory of community assets; inventory of historic assets; tree coverage; zoning analysis; storefront language; analysis of transportation data (traffic count, transit ridership for nearby subway lines, bicycle network and count, parking lots and garages); visitor surveys with data collected around trip origins, visitor frequency, method of transportation, desired changes, favorite places. Econsult also performed an analysis of the demand/supply for affordable housing in the neighborhood, and strategic approaches to providing affordable housing in Chinatown.

Community engagement activities have included individual interviews with local stakeholders, business surveys, an interactive map, and storytelling postcard exercises. The engagement strategy focused on creating diverse types of

engagement opportunities and meeting people where they already spend time. All public engagement opportunities were promoted through a range of mediums, including online, in-person invitations, flyering on the street, door-to-door, and, in significant institutions, plan ambassadors who promoted participation in specific activities. Hard-to-reach groups were targeted through focus groups, interviews, and place-based activities. This was an almost completely bilingual, and sometimes trilingual, planning process, incorporating Chinese language translation of all written communications, and Chinese Mandarin and Cantonese dialect interpretation of all oral communications during the planning process, with the exception of social media posts. Altogether, over 700 responses were collected through the surveying and mapping efforts, from over 20 locations throughout the neighborhood.

Plan strategies focus around:

1. **Built environment** - The plan proposes strategies to improve substandard housing, preserve existing affordable housing, and develop new affordable housing. Additional strategies focus around bridging the community across Vine Street and the Expressway through traffic calming and design measures, improve safety conditions for pedestrians and bikes, and manage parking in the commercial core to support businesses. The plan also proposes strategies to create public space and programming, and improve access to existing and new public spaces.
2. **Economic opportunity** - The plan proposes strategies to strengthen Chinatown's commercial core by forming a Business Improvement District, expanding the commercial district north of Vine Street, and supporting small businesses and manufacturers that will provide jobs.
3. **Community Life** – The plan proposes strategies to promote community wellness and health and strengthen institutions that provide critical services and serve as the hub of community.

Initial action steps include hosting a meeting with public agencies to check in and move forward with Vine Street next steps, convening a health and wellness roundtable to explore strategies and partnerships around community health, identifying and implementing a collaborative community event, meeting with youth-based organizations to identify youth-led projects that relate to elements of the plan.

Lessons learned

1. We offered events with a diverse approach to engagement and participation. Social events tended to attract the most diverse range of stakeholders, including those that might not typically come out to planning events. For example, the happy hour attracted many local workers and millennials, and the ice cream social attracted many youth and families with young children.
2. Partnering with the business community has been key to securing engagement responses from Chinese-speaking visitors as well reaching out to the younger millennial population. Businesses like The Trestle Inn have an already-built brand and appeal to the millennial and young professional population, both Asian and non-Asian.
3. We have found it helpful and possible to align the neighborhood plan with various public sector initiatives and agendas, particularly because several public representatives are members of the Steering Committee.
4. We were inspired by Oakland and San Francisco Chinatown, who created neighborhood plans that framed future planning through the lens of sustainability and health, respectively. Steering Committee members noted that this was a smart strategy to engage stakeholders and supporters in the processes who are engaged in issues of health and sustainability but are not already active in other community issues.
5. This is a changing neighborhood, and there were many demographic groups PCDC had to target for engagement. Some of them were easier than others to engage. It was clear, however, that demographic groups tended to self-segregate by race and class, that many groups were unaware of the experiences or even existence of other groups, and that many groups rarely engaged with each other. As suggested by the neighborhood plan draft, one of the

goals is to create partnerships and increase communication and coordination between different institutions and organizations.

6. Small group discussions provided the most actionable insight for the plan. However, those discussions were not necessarily formal focus groups – they could take place within the confines of larger events, regularly planned meetings, and informal conversations.
7. Having an engaged group of local volunteers (besides the Steering Committee) helped facilitate better and more open discussion among stakeholders because they were able to increase awareness of the plan and build support and understanding of the engagement process through their networks.
8. Meet people where they are. For example, we partnered with a local business to coordinate a focus group of local restaurant workers as this is a hard-to-reach population that would not otherwise be likely to participate in other engagement opportunities due to their long working hours. The discussion took place in the restaurant during their 30-minute lunch break.
9. In retrospect, we would have engaged a translation service and Spanish-speaking volunteers to provide some Spanish language translation and interpretation to enable participation from the Latino community. We would have scheduled one-on-one, in-person meetings with local homeless shelters and mental health providers before we started the planning process, and asked how we could best engage their population and issues in the process. We would have scheduled a focus group for leaders focusing specifically on creating and preserving industrial/manufacturing uses in the region. The plan recommends that we facilitate a working group to talk about best practices and recommendations for our neighborhood around this issue.
10. Interface created a one-page summary of the plan's goals for local distribution. We found this to be very helpful as the plan itself is lengthy and detailed. We have been distributing these to local residents and stakeholders. The one-page summary can unfold into an 11x17 poster.
11. The extended and resource-intensive nature of the engagement process was challenging though rewarding. The most valuable part of engagement, beyond culling feedback for the plan, was to develop and expand relationships with local stakeholders from many different walks of life.
12. The most valuable strategy we have found to maximize engagement is to cultivate local plan ambassadors who have strong relationships with community members. A formal Steering Committee commitment is often not feasible or attractive for many of our local community leaders, who are busy with their own work or not interested in sitting through meetings. However, these local leaders are important to ensuring a resident-driven process because they help to directly encourage participation on the ground and build positive investment in the process from other community members.
13. We found it helpful to create a sense of public momentum for the plan with a clear beginning and end marked by events and press releases. This helps to prevent planning exhaustion and to build support for, and awareness of, the planning process.

Wells Fargo Foundation Neighborhood Planning Grant National Pilot Graduates 2017



Avenue Community Development Corporation Houston, TX

Approval Date: 2/1/2016

Graduation: 6/30/2017

Project name: **OUR Northline – A Health Equity Plan |
Northline Neighborhood**

Number of residents participating: 1,500

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: **Community Design Resource Center of
the University of Houston**

Project description

To develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan for the Northline neighborhood in Houston, TX. Grant funds supported the cost of hiring a consultant to help lead the planning process, staff time associated with the development of the plan, and the costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Surveys.

The Northline community is located approximately four miles north of downtown Houston at the terminus of the North Corridor light rail line. The community is home to just over 16,000 people and 83% of its residents are Hispanic or Latino, 7% African American and 8% white. 28% of Northline's residents live below the poverty line, with a median income of \$28,815. Unemployment rate is at 6.6%. According to Census data over the last decade the number of residents in the community has declined, dropping from 17,895 in 2000 to 16,221 in 2014, a 9% loss. During this same time period Houston's population increased by 7%. The 2014 the American Community Survey reported that 39% of its residents were born outside of the United States, a number 10% higher than the city overall. The majority of its residents are bilingual, 66% of the total, speak both English and Spanish. Northline is characterized by modest wood frame single-family homes and many small businesses. Housing vacancy rate is 10%, and homeowner occupancy rate is 40%.

Major stakeholders participating in the planning process included the Wesley Community Center, YMCA, AARP, Houston Police Department, and Greater Northside Management District. New partners joining included Kipp Charter School, Memorial Hermann (the largest non-profit health system in Southeast Texas), Collaborative for Children, Volunteers of America, and City of Houston Planning Department.

Activities

Assessments performed included: the door-to-door survey (gathering 378 surveys); parcel observations (5,000 parcels); 200 SWOTs reviews with residents; analysis of gaps in services by the Health Collaborative; analysis of the availability of social services, availability of parks, street and sidewalk conditions; land-use study; analysis of connectivity to the city; workforce analysis and availability; baseline data analysis; and a safety assessment.

Outreach activities included a multi-pronged engagement process including attending parent meetings, church services, and civic club meetings. Through these meetings, the Northline Leadership Team developed. The Leadership Team includes residents and partners from area churches, schools, businesses, public agencies and Houston Community College. Stakeholders also developed a mobile interactive installation to elicit feedback from residents, which traveled to three different sites. Children’s voices were captured using art, and youth were engaged in neighborhood improvement projects. Finally, parents were engaged through focused events at area schools. Six large community meetings, 12 Leadership Team meetings, and over a dozen small focus groups and team meetings were held.

The action plan outlines clear steps to transform education, economic development, family wealth, health, housing, infrastructure, parks, community amenities, and safety in Northline—and metrics to measure success over time. Goals include:

- **Partner for safety** with law enforcement agencies, the city, area businesses, and others to enhance safety in the neighborhood.
- **Create safe environments** by making neighborhood streets and places safe.
- **Seed new parks** to create the spaces needed for gatherings and recreation.
- **Build a community center.**
- **Build great streets**, including improved sidewalks and pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
- **Expand opportunities for children, youth, and seniors** by attracting new activities and programs specifically for them.
- **Build strong local schools**, making them schools of choice with the resources they need to succeed.
- **Expand access to high-quality child care.**
- **Improve student success** by ensuring that students have the educational resources they need.
- **Build our future** by developing or improving housing to meet the needs of new homeowners, seniors, and families.

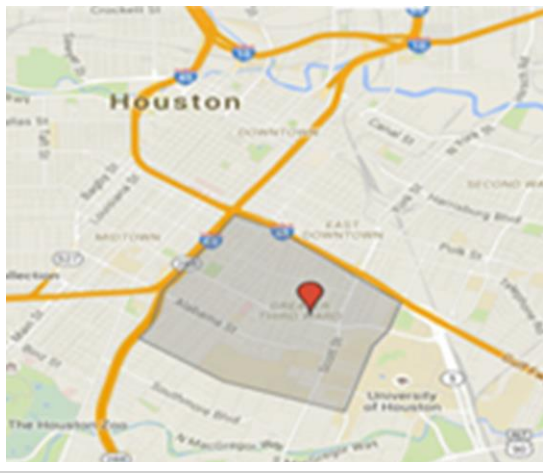
Implementation of the plan is estimated to cost approximately \$70MM (\$3.8MM non capital, \$66MM capital) to implement. Of that amount, \$30MM has been committed.

Early implementation activities have included a Community Resource Fair involving 18 community-based organizations, and resident "feedback stations" to gather resident input. The partnership with the Community Design Resource Center created opportunity for a KABOOM “Play Everywhere” grant. Five early action activities have been completed, including a mural.

Lessons learned

1. Interns and volunteers have been essential in helping support the parcel and door-to-door survey process. Their willingness to have flexible schedules and to go out to the community and engage with residents has been fundamental in accomplishing both tasks.
2. Safety considerations are essential when planning to conduct door-to-door surveys. Our surveyors encountered threatening behavior from vagrants and some residents, which we did not anticipate. We have since met with the police in order to increase awareness of safety concerns, and to allow the community to have a forum to share their thoughts. We hosted a safety meeting with residents and police with a total of 50 residents and 7 officers in attendance, helping to bridge gap between police and residents.

3. Conducting surveys and meetings during the summer can be challenging due to weather and lack of engagement due to travel and activities.
4. Surveying is very dependent on weather; giving your team ample time to complete the surveys is essential to meeting deadlines. Surveying in extreme heat or rain is not productive. Therefore it is important to have given your organization enough time to train surveyors, carry out surveys, and plan for rainy days.
5. Combining concrete data with people's perceptions is essential to fully understanding the community. Crime may be reported as "low", but if the community's perception is that crime is high, they will feel unsafe, avoid the streets, and underutilize their public spaces. Determining why perception is different than data is also very important. For example, underreporting due to people's documentation status or fear of the police are very relevant factors. When working in the community, one has to take both data and perception into account in order to truly comprehend the neighborhood.
6. The greatest lesson of this quarter is that ongoing strategizing and being adaptable is essential. Community and team meetings have been the pillars of the planning process, and they will continue to be. However, we have learned that Coffee with the Principal meetings, and PTA/PTO meetings, are also very useful places where we can gather feedback from the community. Our schools in the community host meetings with as many as 120 parents. These are all residents, and all people who care about the services available for their families, and their children's education. After realizing the success of these meetings, we started strategizing to come into these spaces and host exercises where the community can give input into specific topics (health, safety, education), and into the overall strategy of the plan.
7. Constant outreach is very important. Having solid turnout at events and having a strong leadership team is fantastic. But it is always important to continue to bring churches, schools, and individuals into this process. In the past quarter we have added two schools, a church, and multiple residents into the planning process and community meetings. This new influx of people comes with fresh eyes, ideas, and energy. Our lesson is to always do outreach and continue to bring people to the table, no matter how strong the process seems.
8. Leadership development is crucial to the success of a plan. The leaders that we have worked with and developed for the past year continue to exceed our expectations. They have taken ownership of the plan and have taken it upon themselves to do outreach and to continue connecting their community.
9. Constant outreach is very important.
10. It would have been useful to have funding to hire interns to help with surveys and data entry. The process of data gathering is very lengthy and having a small stipend to pay high school or college students to help would have been valuable.
11. The survey process is lengthy and quite a big challenge. In order to successfully complete this project, it is important to consider weather, safety, number of participants, length of distance in each quadrant, and availability of funding to hire interns to help with surveying and data entry.
12. It is essential to have community buy-in and participation in order to create a plan that is community driven and focused. If the plan is done by and for the community, the goals and outcomes will be more easily accomplished because they will have come from the stakeholders themselves.
13. A wide range of partners can provide a fantastic amount of support and input that is essential for completing a comprehensive plan.



Change Happens! CDC

Houston, TX

Approval Date: 2/1/16

Graduation: 6/30/17

Project name: Northern Third Ward Neighborhood Plan

Number of Residents Participating: 612

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: Spackman Mossop Michaels

Project description

To develop a comprehensive, resident-driven neighborhood revitalization plan for the Northern Third Ward neighborhood in Houston, Texas. The neighborhood is experiencing redevelopment in its northern most points from private developers. The planning process will address current community needs and help to ensure equitable development practices for the community. Grant funds were used for a planning consultant, staff time associated with the development of the plan, and costs associated with the administration of the Resident Satisfaction Survey.

The Northern Third Ward, though large in size is not extremely dense, with about 13,000 residents living in the 2.5 square mile area. The neighborhood is located just south of Houston's Downtown and is challenged with significantly high poverty rates (42.6%), vacant land (housing vacancy rate of 26.5%), and high crime levels. Despite its challenges, the neighborhood is experiencing redevelopment in its northern most points from private developers. Additionally, there are several public investments currently being made in the neighborhood that will help to accelerate the neighborhood's growth. The neighborhood is also home to Emancipation Avenue, a historic commercial corridor which will be targeted for revitalization as part of the implementation of the plan. The neighborhood is 70% Black or African American, 5% Asian, 13% Hispanic or Latino, 1% Two or More Races, and 11% White.

Change Happens! serves as the lead partner of the Northern Third Ward Consortium, which consists of five strong nonprofits with a common goal to help redevelop the Northern Third Ward. They are: Change Happens/Change Happens CDC, Project Row House and Project Row House CDC, the University of Houston, Wheeler Avenue Triangle Ministries, and the William A. Lawson Institute for Peace and Prosperity. The Consortium represents a broad spectrum of community development, education, community engagement, and social service experience. Other stakeholders include Emancipation Economic Development Council, Houston College, Texas Southern University, Houston Community College, and Rice University. The Northern Third Ward is currently the focus of several revitalization initiatives within its sub-neighborhoods, and has worked closely with these initiatives to coordinate messages and leverage resources.

Activities

Assessments performed included: assessing 362 door-to-door surveys to determine residents' perceptions, needs, and desires; analyzing housing, employment, and business trends; observing and tracking parcel conditions and physical assets; analyzing community engagement meeting feedback; evaluating crime maps generated by Houston Police Department; conducting literature review of existing research on Northern Third Ward; and reviewing a market analysis and previous city plans. Community Engagement activities have included six community-wide engagement activities and

three focus groups with the faith-based community, educators and senior citizens. Additionally, word-of-mouth, e-mail blasts, and radio public service announcements helped spread word about the Northern Third Ward Neighborhood Planning Project and its components and goals.

Plan strategies focus around Housing, Neighborhood Building, Economic Development and Workforce, Education and Families, Children and Seniors. High priority strategies include:

1. Housing

- Creating or supporting renter assistance programs.
- Preserving and maintaining existing housing.
- Assisting with home repairs and using vacant property for new housing.
- Developing new housing which is strategically developed as mixed-use and affordable units.

2. Neighborhood building

- Building Collective Capacity with strong community networks utilizing block captains, social media and a website.
- Hosting regularly scheduled community events, block parties, and clean ups, along with an annual neighborhood summit to discuss our ongoing priorities.
- Supporting existing programs and working in partnership with community organizations and institutions to create youth leadership opportunities.
- Identifying and prioritizing areas with poor street lighting and partnering with others to install LED lighting.
- Developing Community Policing through stronger relationships with police, advocating for more police on bikes, and creating a block captains program.
- Improving sidewalks, expanding B-Cycle stations in the neighborhood, and creating a ride share program.
- Installing new “ART” trash receptacles in the community.
- Re-purposing vacant lots as mini-parks, plazas, or urban gardens.

3. Economic development and workforce

- Developing Buy Local / Shop Third Ward campaigns.
- Implementing a Facade Improvement Program to assist local businesses and provide local jobs.
- Seeding New Community-Owned or Worker-Owned Cooperatives and Businesses, focusing on full service grocery stores, restaurants, basic service stores, banks and financial services.
- Activating Vacant Storefronts, Historic Buildings and Lots with Pop-Up Shops.
- Encouraging major employers and anchor institutions to employ local residents.

4. Education

- Building Parent-Teacher engagement to provide holistic resources and ensure academic success to students.
- Publicizing Out-of-School Programs through a directory of programs.
- Expanding Out-of-School Enrichment Programs for youth and develop youth mentorship programs.

5. Families, children, and seniors

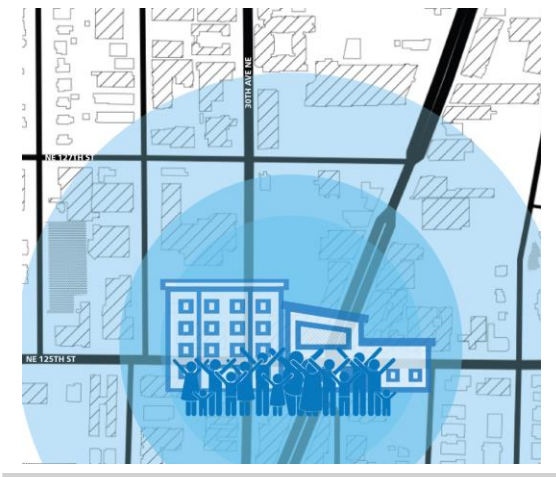
- Building a stronger community of support through intergenerational gatherings and events.
- Creating a directory of Family and Senior Services.
- Supporting services to families including financial literacy and credit counseling.
- Expanding knowledge of and access to preventative healthcare programs in the community.

Lessons learned

1. Hiring a full-time staff person to work on the project from the onset would be helpful. The consortium members are volunteers, and much of the early steps in the process have required significant investment of time and resources.
2. Conducting the parcel surveys, via the cameras, prior to the resident surveys would have streamlined the door-to-door survey process by providing data on all of the properties in the Northern Third Ward area. A quick, early visual survey tied to addresses would have provided information on which addresses were actually vacant lots and properties. This would have made the door-to-door survey process much more efficient.
3. Utilizing surveyors that are able to work the days and hours scheduled for surveying each week is crucial. When surveyors are absent, it decreases efficiency and the number of surveys conducted for that day.
4. The surveyors are the best people to provide information and subtle insights about the neighborhood in which surveys are conducted, as they are the ones that are walking and observing the neighborhoods. Therefore, including debriefing sessions to collect/gather information about the surveyor's experiences in the field, as well as to gather feedback regarding concerns of residents that may not be collected in the survey process. The project is considering developing a focus group discussion to collect surveyor insights and recommendations.
5. Develop and train surveyors on safety protocols and procedures when conducting door-to-door surveys in community settings.
6. Budgeting that would allow for greater incentives to resident surveyors would attract more participation, as well as increase the number of surveyors needed for the project.
7. If using video cameras to conduct the physical observations at the parcel level, it is best to have multiple camera batteries because the constant filming causes the batteries to die rather quickly. It is important to charge all of the batteries before going out in the field. Another good practice is to label the camera and the SD (secure data memory card) card to ensure that the filming is accurate with regard to street locations and side of the street that filming is occurring. It is suggested that one camera is labeled "driver" and the other camera "passenger" and that the SD cards be labeled the same. Creating a template to record the streets and the direction in which the vehicle is traveling helps to make the video labeling process much easier. It also helps when the process of organizing and describing the parcels begins. Another suggestion is that each film clip (the segment of film created when the camera is started and after it is stopped) is automatically numbered (indexed) by the camera software (the NTW project uses GoPro). Each film clip or segment must be re-indexed accurately to indicate the information that is on the clip. This facilitates an accurate review of the information (street locations) on an individual film clip.
8. Many residents who were not on the sample requested to complete a survey. Surveys were administered to these residents, but not included in the sample. Success Measures created a new evaluation called "Third Ward Community Survey - 2016 - RESPONSES OUTSIDE SAMPLE", so that the project could enter and analyze this data as well.
9. Conducting the physical observations prior to the conducting the resident surveys as this would save surveyors going to vacant properties or properties that were not habitable. In addition, using a laptop or iPad to enter the data directly into the Excel forms while conducting the observations would also be more efficient.
10. The project found that using a company vehicle to navigate the streets was positive because community members recognized it and, rather than view the parcel observations suspiciously, residents welcomed the process.
11. When finalizing the plan, reading every page was vital because in the midst of all of the information, some things can be looked over. The Steering Committee tirelessly went over every page of the plan and made edits and

additions to the plan together. Regular, consistent meeting of the Steering Committee allows a clear vision, governance, clear communication, and shared expectations.

12. We learned using multiple methods of distribution is more effective. We used flyers, door hangers, post cards, social media platforms, voice broadcast/auto dial calls (DialMyCalls software), mail-out (including emails), newspaper ads, and radio announcements. Multiple avenues of advertising is important because not all residents have email, use social media, listen to the radio, etc. To capture these lessons, we developed a comprehensive Outreach Plan that provided detailed structure for outreach activities, a timeline, and persons responsible for carrying out outreach activities.
13. As it pertains to outreach and promotion of the plan we learned that in contacting televised news stations, we were informed that most stations do not plan their news stories until 48 to 24 hours ahead of time. Therefore, to gain airtime, we should contact the stations within that timeframe. Radio stations work in a similar fashion. Local magazines send their material to print on Thursday, so in order to have ample time to run your advertisement, everything should be sent in a week in advance. Keep in mind, they only run material for a week unless paid for, and advertisements can be pricey. Most newspapers will run your advertisement through their email blast for a lesser price. We should retain a running list of local businesses, universities, and organizations willing to house post cards and flyers. This will make promotional material distribution more efficient.



Children's Home Society of Washington Seattle, WA

Approval Date: 2/1/16

Graduation: 6/30/17

Project name: Imagine Lake City Neighborhood Plan

Number of Residents Participating: 500

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: BDS Planning & Urban Design

Project description

In partnership with the Lake City Neighborhood Association and Lake City Future First, the goal was to develop a comprehensive, resident-driven revitalization plan for the Little Brook and Hub Urban Village subsections of the Lake City neighborhood in Seattle, Washington. Grant funds were used for a planning consultant, staff time associated with the development of the plan, and costs associated with the administration of the Resident Satisfaction Survey.

The Lake City neighborhood is 4.1 square miles, located in northeast Seattle which was formerly unincorporated. Lake City is comprised of the sub neighborhoods of Cedar Park, Olympic Hills, Victory Heights, Meadowbrook, and North Matthew's Beach. There is substantial variation in use, form and demographics across the Lake City area, and major physical divisions that accentuate differences. The total population is 28,375, with 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 15% Asian, 15% Black or African American, 14% Hispanic or Latino, 1% Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander, 6% Two or More Races, 48% White.

The neighborhood is characterized by high rental populations and an abundance of multi-family and apartment buildings. 67% of the neighborhood's population falls below the city's median income of \$65,277. The Lake City neighborhood has experienced higher crime statistics than the city at large. In addition, due to rising rental costs, the main commercial corridor is experiencing significant blight as many small businesses find themselves having to close. Like much of Seattle, rapid redevelopment downtown has increased market pressures for the region. Though Lake City has experienced housing redevelopment, other services and infrastructure investments have been neglected. There is a great need for proper transportation, green and play spaces, and quality affordable housing.

The Imagine Lake City Planning Process was overseen by a 28-member Steering Committee representing residents, key Lake City neighborhood groups, local institutions, businesses, city departments and city council representatives, park advocates, educators, faith leaders, and service providers.

Activities

Assessments performed included: a review of prior plans, visions and urban design plans developed in 1999, 2012, 2013 and 2014; a survey of over 1400 individual Lake City land parcels by dozens of volunteers; and a randomly selected resident perception's survey reaching 174 individuals. Outreach activities included hosting eleven affinity groups engaging more than 100 people, with focus on reaching residents, seniors, Spanish-speakers, youth, young families, English

language learners, businesses, and people experiencing homelessness. Three community conversations were held for residents to provide feedback on proposed strategies.

The plan's vision statement is as follows:

We imagine Lake City energized by the strength of its increasingly diverse and committed residents, businesses, community groups, and institutions—together we are becoming an ever safer, more beautiful, healthy, and connected community.

The plan's goals fall into four main areas:

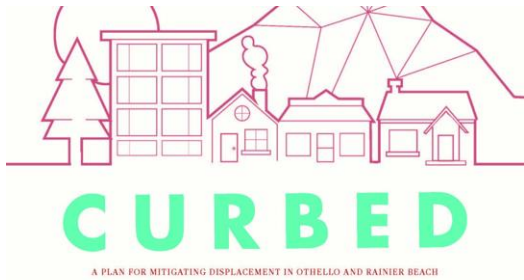
1. **Creating community by providing Lake City residents and workers with places and forums to come together and affect positive change in their community.**
 - Obtain support and funding for a new Community Center
 - Make improvements to existing public open and parks space and public rights-of-way
 - Synthesize and build on existing public and private urban design plans and planning proposals
2. **Developing and improving tangible and intangible connections between Lake City people, places, and resources.**
 - Strengthen enjoylakecity.org as a community central on-line community space
 - Establish youth advisory board
3. **Asserting a positive image of Lake City to foster citywide recognition and local pride.**
 - New neighborhood branding
 - Lake City Way beautification
 - Empty storefront activation
4. **Developing resources tailored for vulnerable groups to improve the well-being of our community as a whole.**
 - Community navigators, peer advocates & interpreter program
 - Community engagement process for new affordable intergenerational activities
 - Crisis intervention
 - Expanded day center hours

The total plan implementation budget is approximately \$42MM. Early implementation activities include the development of a website updated with information from all participating partners, as well as the upgrade of a neighborhood park.

Lessons learned

1. Early in the grant period, schedule an in-depth conversation with Policy Map and Success Measures technical consultants about setting up project boundaries to understand better what they are used for and how to communicate to volunteers about them.
2. We felt strongly that the parcel survey could have informed our planning process for the neighborhood survey. We recommend that grantees do the parcel survey first to aid in collecting information and gaining access to secure buildings during the survey process.

3. Having a “return by mail” option for the surveys, although not optimal, has increased participation. (Editor’s note: this is a back-up plan for neighborhood’s that are struggling with the random sample.)
4. Consider hiring paid surveyors versus volunteers. Other neighborhoods have reported higher survey completion rates when using paid staff.
5. The incentives, while appreciated, did not seem to increase participation. The gift cards given to volunteers were often returned to be used for programs or participants. We have awarded the first of three incentives to residents who completed surveys. They were pleased, but most residents who completed the surveys thus far participated out of concern for the community, curiosity about our project, or compliance with our process.
6. Marketing and outreach, including messaging and identifying t-shirts helped residents expect us and appeared to increase willingness to participate. Branding the project has been an important and valuable success.
7. It would have been very helpful to know that the unit numbers that were given to us were not actual unit numbers. We spent a significant amount of time and money on an outreach mailing that was not deliverable except to the 20% of single-family residences. We have worked with City of Seattle, a local resident/realtor and used our parcel survey to try and get accurate unit numbers in the multi-unit samples.
8. A strong theme among all team members has been the importance and strength of community building, deep listening, and engagement of participants and constituents that may not normally be engaged in the community planning process. The resident survey has been a part of that learning process.
9. The focus groups have also been a powerful experience for our team. Our youth focus group was a wonderful opportunity to share leadership with two steering committee members (a youth and an adult) and to hear the voice of our youth. We were pleased that the senior focus group not only focused on issues important to their cohort (safety, accessibility, resources) but also shared concerns regarding our youth. The business focus group was also a powerful experience. “Businesses in Lake City have always been very difficult to engage and although I knew there was a myriad of reasons, I didn’t realize how this model could break down some barriers and make connections. I found that this particular setting of a “focus group” provides a kind of engagement and voice they have not been offered before. The process amplifies how much they don’t know each other as people doing business in the same neighborhood and how common their experience is.”
10. The driving lesson of our project is the vital importance of authentic and inclusive community engagement. While the resident survey was an uphill climb, the random nature of the effort revealed information that might not otherwise have been shared. We also affirmed the incredible value and assets of volunteers in our community. We recognize the committed, diverse and powerful nature of our residents, business owners, civic leaders and community advocates. Through our work with the planning consultant and the training model used of equipping and engaging our leadership to do facilitation, surveys, engagement and analysis, we both strengthened our community leadership and leveraged our financial and human resources to accomplish our goals.
11. This process contributed to the development of diverse community voices and growing leadership; this happened because a wide variety of people were given opportunities to lead various parts of the plan (rather than those community members typically most outspoken, etc.) The committee members became more familiar with each other, with other organizations, and of how beneficial it was to collaborate for funding and integrated services.
12. While the survey process was cumbersome, it became more productive once we were able to customize the methods with WFRF approval. One of the primary barriers was inability to access secured apartment buildings in the community; this may have contributed to underrepresenting upper-income millennials who are not involved already in the neighborhood, and refugees/immigrants due to language barriers (at least 39 languages in Lake City).



HomeSight, Inc.

Seattle, WA

Approval Date: 2/1/16

Graduation: 6/30/17

Project name: Curbed: A Plan for Othello and Rainier Beach

Number of Residents Participating: 700

Funded Amount: \$100,000

Lead Consultant: Nora Liu and Ryan Curren

Project description

To develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan that builds off of the two existing plans for the Othello and Rainier Beach neighborhoods in the southeast area of Seattle, Washington. HomeSight, a leading community development organization in the City of Seattle organized residents, community leaders, and public officials through a resident-driven neighborhood planning process for the Othello and Rainier Beach neighborhoods. The neighborhood planning grant funds were used to cover the cost of hiring a planning consultant, staff time associated with the development of the plan, and the costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Surveys.

The Othello/Rainier Beach neighborhood is characterized by diverse housing stock and rising housing costs. The neighborhood is one square mile in size, and has a population of 3,160 people. The poverty rate is 23% and median income is \$31,280. The neighborhood is ethnically and racially diverse. It represents an array of people of color, immigrant, and refugee communities with 40 distinct ethnic groups – over one-fourth of whom are new arrivals – and through whom 59 languages are spoken. The neighborhood racial and ethnic demographics consist of 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 27% Asian, 37% Black or African American, 6% Hispanic or Latino, 6% Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander, 2% Two or More Races, and 21% White. Othello and Rainier Beach are home to a number of lively business districts, cultural anchors, and a strong nonprofit industry that has emerged to fill gaps left by disinvestment.

The Othello and Rainier Beach Neighborhoods, as part of South King County and the City of Seattle, are experiencing an influx of new residents who have been displaced from other neighborhoods in the city as a result of market pressures from the significant redevelopment that is currently taking place in Seattle. With the influx of new residents, there has been a concentration of need in the South King County area.

The neighborhood is currently part of Communities of Opportunity, a cross-sector collaboration to elevate community solutions; and to improve health, housing and economic opportunity at the policy level. Financial resources are also starting to be galvanized in the South King County areas of homeownership, post-secondary education, business development, and technical assistance. The planning process was overseen by a 10-member Steering Committee representing residents and stakeholders participating in the Communities of Opportunity. HomeSight partnered with Rainier Beach Action Coalition, Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King County, and On Board Othello throughout the planning process.

Activities

“Curbed” pulls together, updates, and fills in gaps in the Othello Neighborhood Plan and recently adopted Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan to create one, overarching plan for Othello/Rainier Beach. Curbed creates one plan uniting two neighborhoods located along the light rail line, where the majority of growth and development will be concentrated. The “Curbed” planning process began with a community survey. 308 completed resident satisfaction surveys were gathered through randomized door-knocking and collection activities. In addition, a block and parcel survey was administered to take stock of the built environment. A survey of business merchant needs and concerns was also administered. To complement the survey, three community open houses were held to collect supplementary information drawing more than 350 neighbors, business owners, and youth.

The plan’s vision statement is as follows:

Othello/Rainier Beach remains a culturally, racially, and economically diverse community; and the neighborhood includes the community anchors, supports, goods, services, and amenities necessary for everyone to lead healthy lives and flourish—where everyone can achieve their full potential regardless of race or means.

The plan’s goals fall into five main areas:

1. All people are **healthy** regardless of race or means.
2. All people have **quality affordable housing** regardless of race or means.
3. Everyone and all communities are **able to stay, rather than be displaced**, regardless of race or means.
4. All people **thrive economically** regardless of race or means.
5. All people are **connected to community** regardless of race or means.

Key projects of note include:

- Senior Meals Program;
- MCC Co Work Space Capital Campaign;
- Electronic Kiosk;
- Small Business Technical Assistance;
- Priority Hire Stewardship;
- Food Innovation Center;
- A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth;
- Health & Preventative Care Campaign;
- Youth Dialogues for Peace and Community Safety;
- Rainier Beach High School International Baccalaureate World Conference;
- Farm Stand; and
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

The overall budget to implement the plan is \$213MM. A number of projects/goals are large capital, development projects. As such, a number of capital campaigns have been started and land acquisition is under way. Some of the programs outlined in the plan are already underway such as Senior Meals, the Othello Farm Stand, A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth, Othello Park Pictures, and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

Lessons learned

1. With a very diverse population in our neighborhood, HomeSight has learned that utilizing in-person translation services yields a higher completed survey rate than providing translated copies of the survey alone. We make use of a language card that has commonly spoken languages, spelled out in that language, for participants to point to. We then mark the household and the desired language and find a volunteer who speaks that language to return and administer the survey. We have shared this lesson learned, along with our language card with Children's Home Society working out of Lake City, which also has multi-cultural community.
2. While much of our geography consists of single-family households (which has its own challenges), there is one large, multi-family apartment complex of 350 units in our neighborhood. A large number of units from this building were included in our sample but gaining access to the building is restricted, and we were unable to knock on individual doors. Instead, we worked with the building's management to rent their community room on three different occasions at varying times to complete surveys. We sent postcards out ahead of time to the units in our sample and advertised free food. This tactic resulted in good attendance and yield.
3. We changed our survey strategy, adding convenience to incentivize neighbors. This included:
 - Hosting a drop off site multiple days/times at the neighborhood Safeway. Neighbors could drop off their completed surveys and receive their \$10 Safeway gift card all while doing their grocery shopping. We also had folks fill out the survey on site. To make it more of an event, we also hosted the Mobile Discovery Center – a tricked out trailer with community happenings and friendly volunteers who handed out free hot cocoa!
 - While door knocking, volunteers offered a new option to neighbors who answered the door. If they didn't have time to take the survey right away, they could fill it out on their own time and leave it on their front porch during a scheduled pick up, and their \$10 gift card would then be mailed to them.
4. Going through the Wells Fargo Planning Grant process has not been without its challenges. However, we were able to rise and meet those challenges because of our strong partnership with Rainier Beach Action Coalition and Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King County. Throughout this process, collaboration has been the key to our success.
5. In hindsight, we would have done more fundraising or dedicated more of our WFRF award to fully resource our collaborative partners, cover more staff time, and to more generously thank our volunteers.
6. In the future, we would ensure that the consultants we work with can be fully engaged in the planning process, including door knocking, outreach, and hosting events. We have great relationships with the two consultants we used and would certainly recommend them but with the caveat that they, and any consultant, get their hands dirty in the process and don't write from afar.



Strong City Baltimore/Central Baltimore Partnership Baltimore, MD

Approval Date: 2/1/16

Graduation: 6/30/17

**Project name: Front & Center: A comprehensive Equity Plan for
Central Baltimore**

Number of Residents Participating: 250

Funded Amount: \$90,000

Lead Consultant: McNeely Legal Services (MLS)

Project description

Strong City Baltimore and Central Baltimore Partnership teamed together to lead the creation of a ten-year, resident-driven, comprehensive neighborhood plan for the six lowest-income sub-neighborhoods of Central Baltimore. The six neighborhoods in focus are: Barclay, Charles North, Greenmount West, Harwood, Old Goucher, and Remington. The planning process was led by Central Baltimore Partnership, a highly structured collaborative comprised of nearly 100 public and private organizations that have worked together to attract and retain residents and investment in the ten sub-neighborhoods (and one commercial district) in Central Baltimore.

WFRF's planning grant of \$90,000 was used for the planning consultant, staff time costs for both Strong City Baltimore and Central Baltimore Partnership, and the costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Surveys.

Planning partners included: 29th Street Community Center; AHC, Inc. Greater Baltimore - Workforce Program; Annie E. Casey Foundation; Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers; Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development; Baltimore City Department of Planning; Baltimore City YouthWorks; Baltimore Heritage; Baltimore Housing Upgrades to Benefit Seniors; Behavioral Health Systems Baltimore; Boundary Square Apartments; BYKE Collective; CT Management; Greater Greenmount Community Association; Greater Remington Improvement Association; Greenmount Recreation Center; Greenmount West Community Association; Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC); Institute for Behavioral Resources; Johns Hopkins 21st Centuries Cities Initiative; Johns Hopkins University; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; J. Van Story Branch Apartments; Jubilee Baltimore; CREDITS; Keswick Multi-Care Center; Lovely Lane United Methodist Church; Maryland Bay Construction; Maryland New Directions; Mosaic Community Services, Inc.; Open Works; People's Homesteading Group; Strong City Baltimore; Telesis Corporation of Baltimore.

Central Baltimore is a vibrant group of ten neighborhoods at the heart of Baltimore City. Central Baltimore's residential areas are conveniently located near Penn Station, a national transit hub, and are flanked by commercial corridors on North Charles Street, 25th Street, and North Avenue. Baltimore is a "city of neighborhoods", and each of the ten Central Baltimore neighborhoods has its own unique character. This plan focuses on six of the lowest income sub-neighborhoods, approximately one square mile in size, with 12,838 people. Ethnically diverse, the area is comprised of 5% Asian, 52% Black or African American, 4% Hispanic or Latino, 4% Two or More Races, 35% White individuals.

Activities

The 2012 The Homewood Community Partners Initiative (HCPI) Action plan served as the baseline document for the development of the Front and Center neighborhood plan. The HCPI Plan provided a vision for the future of ten neighborhoods in the Central Baltimore region. During the most recent 2017 planning process, CBP engaged approximately 250 residents in the development of the plan. Two hundred resident perception surveys were completed and three focus groups were held which convened 30 residents.

The plan's vision statement is as follows:

We envision a future when everyone, every family, is benefiting from the revitalization of the ten neighborhoods of Central Baltimore. Families who previously suffered deprivation and discrimination that wholly or partially disconnected them from the mainstream economy and institutions will capture the opportunities for employment, education, business and economic resilience that derive from an inclusive, high-growth, high-investment revitalization. Young people will especially benefit and become active contributors to youth and community activity. Every business, institution and civic organization will have deliberate and effective practices that ensure access to jobs and goods and services for all, and will measure their success accordingly. The strengths of a diverse population will be available to, and will benefit, all.

The Plan's goals focus on four areas:

1. Social Fabric: Youth and Families

- Create a formal network of Community Centers that shares information and resources and better reaches youth and families.
- Create youth engagement and leadership development opportunities.
- Support job readiness and increase job opportunities.
- Develop better platforms for parent engagement and support.
- Create a Diverse Network of Pro-bono Navigators.
- Continue a Youth and Families Work Group within the Central Baltimore Partnership.

2. Economic Mobility

- Foster internship-like training programs.
- Strengthen coordination with demand-side opportunities in growing job sectors.
- Ensure residents looking for work are supported throughout the job-seeking process.
- Restore a Barrier Removal program/fund.
- Improve opportunities for those who are hard to employ or do not fit within traditional job markets.

3. Community Health Physical and Mental Health

- Improve coordination of services by forming a network of organizations currently providing services within Central Baltimore.
- Create a formal Community Health Task Force to mobilize expertise and develop an intervention strategy for improving health outcomes in the Target Neighborhoods.
- Start by pursuing short-term, highly focused actions that are easy to implement.

- Sustain a formal method within the Central Baltimore Partnership for planning, program implementation, coordination, evaluation, and accountability of health outcomes activity.
4. **Housing Access: Preserving Affordability, Improving Quality, Expanding Choices**
- Help all residents to safely maintain their homes and age in place.
 - Preserve and improve housing affordability in Central Baltimore.

The total plan implementation budget is \$15.6MM of which \$9.2MM is capital dollars and \$6.4MM is non capital dollars.

Lessons learned

1. How much more outreach is necessary for neighborhoods with existing, dated plans, to understand the value of creating a new cross-neighborhood action-driven Comprehensive Plan. New resident leaders are skeptical that a new plan would be worth their limited time and attention. They are especially passionate, about the need for immediate action and impatient to affect change.
2. The involvement of youth in the survey has demonstrated the value of involving youth in our planning. Although they require closer supervision and more detailed organization than adult participants, nearly all of the 30 youth we employed brought visible energy and enthusiasm, and insight, to this process and have helped mobilize adult volunteers as well as survey respondents.
3. Bringing resident leaders together for a shared, focused project has already improved cohesion among the leaders of adjoining neighborhoods, and it appears likely these stronger working relationships will continue after this planning process.
4. Tremendous value of involving and compensating youth in the survey process was reaffirmed. Working with local schools provides access to a large pool of enthusiastic and capable survey administrators, and provides youth with exposure to the data collection process of community development.
5. Communities face survey fatigue. Coordinating survey efforts with other organizations was a useful strategy for avoiding survey fatigue. Residents experiencing survey fatigue felt they were often surveyed, but rarely saw change as a result of the survey.
6. Surveys take an unexpected significant amount of staff time and resources.
7. As we begin to evaluate the information collected for the 2012 HCPI Plan assessment, two things have been reinforced. First, the process of conducting thorough analysis of community development work is both challenging and powerful. Neighborhood revitalization is not easily measured, however, as our evaluation takes shape it is easy to see not only the physical changes that have unfolded, but also the impact the CBP's collective partnership has contributed to improving the quality of life for Central Baltimore residents, businesses and institutions. Second, this evaluation affords us the opportunity to create new strategic action plans for the next five years by building on successful activity over the last five years. Specifically, we're using this opportunity to hone in on gaps in resources, services, etc., and to identify where improvements are needed to complete the comprehensive revitalization agenda for Central Baltimore's six lowest-income communities.
8. CBP has found tremendous value in the ability to contract with local consultants throughout the planning process. Although CBP staff have developed most of the content of the Plan, it has been invaluable to consult those with an independent perspective to help guide our approach. Because our consultants were local, they have had experiences working with the same communities the Front and Center Plan targets, which provided an additional layer of insight to our approach throughout the process.

9. Given the amount of time and resources necessary to develop a comprehensive plan, it was necessary to embed this planning process into many of CBP's existing frameworks. For example, CBP used its long-standing Partnership Meetings (held five times a year) as public forums to gauge community input for the Front and Center Plan. This allowed the Front and Center planning team to tap into a valuable meeting setting that brings together a wide array of community stakeholders, resources, expertise, and perspectives to bolster collective community change. It also kept us from burdening community residents and stakeholders with too many meetings. This framework could accommodate the new framework for implementing the Front and Center Plan.
10. Planning and administering the resident satisfaction surveys occupied an unexpected amount of staff time and resources. Organizations undertaking a community survey should allot plenty of staff time and resources to this process.
11. The process of writing, editing, and laying out the plan was also unexpectedly time consuming. Organizations undergoing the planning process should allot ample time for these steps as well.
12. Alerting community members of focus groups, work groups, and public forums requires the efforts of a designated Community Outreach Coordinator.
13. Engaging consultants with experience working in the neighborhoods targeted by the plan is very helpful.
14. If you plan on engaging youth in the planning process, school schedules can become a barrier.
15. Offering adult and youth residents stipends for their service as surveyors was an effective way to engage those that were not usually included in planning processes and identify community leadership.



The Community Builders

Baltimore, MD

Approval Date: 2/1/16

Graduation: 6/30/17

Project name: Historic Upton Neighborhood Framework 2026

Number of Residents Participating: 200

Funded Amount: \$75,000

Lead Consultant: V. Lamar Wilson & Associates

Project description

The Community Builders, Inc. teamed with the Upton Planning Committee and the Bethel Empowerment and Wellness Center, to develop a Master Plan Framework for the Upton Neighborhood. The Framework outlines existing conditions of the neighborhood to help inform future development by identifying strengths to build from and opportunities to consider pursuing. The planning grant was used to fund the planning consultant, to pay for Upton Planning Committee staff costs, and the costs associated with the Resident Satisfaction Surveys.

The Upton plan area encompasses approximately 60 square blocks, one square mile, situated in central Baltimore City, with approximately 10,000 residents. The Upton neighborhood is comprised of seven sub-neighborhoods: Etting, Heritage Crossing, Historic Marble Hill, McCulloh Homes, Northwest, Providence and Upton West. Upton is home to dozens of historic sites with varying levels of historic designation. Once known as the “Harlem of Baltimore” for its elegant housing and civil rights heritage, its commercial corridor (Pennsylvania Avenue) was the premier shopping and entertainment strip, evoking comparisons to Lennox Avenue in Harlem. More than 50% of residents are living in poverty, and the neighborhood has a 33% housing vacancy rate (over 300 vacant homes) and 16% homeownership rate. The median household income is \$13,300 as compared to \$37,000 for the city. The unemployment rate is 26%. 93% of Upton residents are African American, compared to 63% citywide.

Activities

Project partners included resident leadership from all eight sub-neighborhoods, Baltimore City Planning Department, Vacants to Value, Baltimore City Police Department, Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street, Baltimore City Public Schools/Promise Heights, Youth Perspective, and local nonprofit organizations. Over 300 stakeholders participated in the process.

Assessments included a comparative data review of the state of Upton in 2005 and the state of Upton in 2016 including review of current housing statistics, area demographics, and market analysis of property sales, social service and education statistics, and community crime statistics. Additional assessments included the Resident Satisfaction Survey and parcel level data from the Vacants to Value project.

The process built capacity-strengthening outcomes which will:

- Enhance community education and public awareness, particularly in the area of land and building use.

- Strengthen service delivery by targeting populations who are in the greatest need of intervention and support.
- Strengthen efforts to align with city-wide initiatives.
- Strengthen efforts to raise critically needed funding, and providing significant data for grant writing.

The Framework developed the following guiding principles for development:

- Build on the physical and historical strengths of the neighborhood.
- Preserve the existing character of the neighborhood.
- Create a mixed-income community.
- Capitalize on its African American heritage.
- Provide amenities that meet the needs of families, senior citizens, children and youth, professionals and merchants.
- Build a critical mass of each type to support and sustain a viable commercial district, and vice versa.
- Find a healthy balance between new development on, and permanent greening of vacant lands in the neighborhood.
- Prevent displacement of and embrace equitable development for lower-income residents.

Program Priorities are centered on:

- **Community engagement** - Ensure community stakeholders are engaged in the revitalization process for their neighborhood.
- **Economic development** - Improve local business districts and connect the local workforce to job opportunities locally and in the region.
- **Green space and safety**-Increase community access to green spaces, parks and recreation facilities, and enhance public safety and security.
- **Housing** - Preserve and increase the stock of quality affordable housing for lower income homeowners and renters.
- **Quality of life** - Ensure access to affordable healthy foods, quality education, affordable healthcare, and public safety.
- **Education** - Provide early childhood education and tutoring support for all students, particularly those not reading at grade level.
- **Transportation** - Support transportation choices and promote transportation networks that are efficient and environmentally sustainable.

Upton has successfully used the principals developed within the framework to secure:

- \$640,000 in 2017 Project CORE support from the State of Maryland for the redevelopment of 8 houses.
- \$2,200,000 in 2018 Project CORE support from the State of Maryland for the redevelopment of 2 blocks.
- \$400,000 from Baltimore Housing Department for “landscaping and greening” for the above 2 blocks.
- Gap financing from Baltimore Housing Department in the amount of \$50,000 per unit for the 2 blocks of redevelopment.
- A contract with Main Street Management for redevelopment of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Lessons learned

1. Youth interviewers form an important bridge on the resident survey team. We modified the survey training to meet youth learning needs and created an interactive training with additional practice and role plays. During the training, we also created a discussion/listening session to discuss youth perceptions of the community and tied them to the opportunity that the planning effort offers. This enhanced the youth's ability to communicate the purpose of the survey and helped create cohesion on the survey team.
2. Real-time surveying can provide significant context to the planning process given high level of and frequent churn of residencies.
3. Upton is a blighted community with one in every three houses vacant. There is also a high transiency population in the community. We learned that these factors can greatly impeded community outreach and surveying efforts. We are very proud to have completed over 200 surveys in the community, given our housing stock challenges.
4. Upton is a community with less than 30% homeownership. We have learned that there is a need to embrace alternative models that provide gap financing mechanisms to help community members seeking homeownership.
5. The community has learned the value of supporting development projects that increase values in the community, ultimately helping homeowners increase their home equity and family wealth.
6. We have also learned that there is a dire need of supports for existing homeowners. These supports help to ensure that homeowners who have held on for years do not lose their home but more importantly, can access vital resources to refurbish and maintain their homes. There is a need for the community to work with the City and State to ensure that increased home values will not adversely affect existing homeowners with rising taxes etc., mechanisms that have been used to displace residents.

Adams County Allegheny West Allentown Allison Hill **Asbury Park**
Atlantic City Atlanic County Berks County Bergen County Berwyck
 Bethlehem Bradford County Brewerytown **Bridgeton** Bristol Bucks
 County Burlington County **Camden** Camden County Canal Banks Cape May
 County Carbon County **Central Dover** Centre County **Chester** Chester County
Chinatown Clinton County **Coatesville** Cobbs Creek Columbia County
 Cooper Grant Cramer Hill Cumberland County Dauphin County **DELAWARE**
 Delaware County **Delaware Gardens** **Dover** **Ducktown** **East Camden**
East Ferry East Kensington East Linden East Trenton
 East Ward Irvington Eastern Northern Philadelphia **Elizabeth**
 Elizabethport Essex County Fairhill Fairmont **Fairmont Heights**
 Fairview Ferry Street Francisville Frankenville Freedom **Gateway**
 Gloucester County Greater Budapest Greenville Grays Ferry Haddington
Harrisburg Hudson County Hunterdon Count **Hunting Park** Jefferson
 Square **Jersey City** Jordan Heights Juniata County **Kennett Square**
 Kensington Kent County La Salle Street Lackawanna County **Lancaster**
 Lancaster County Lehigh County Lehigh Valley **Lincoln Park** Linden Street
 Logan **Lower Broadway** Lower Lancaster Luzerne County Lycoming County
 Mercer County Middlesex County Mifflin County **Millville** Monmouth County
 Monroe County Montgomery County Montour County Morris County **Mt. Airy**
Neptune **New Brunswick** New Castle County **NEW JERSEY**
New Kensington **Newark** North Camden Norris Square **Norristown**
North Philadelphia North Riverside Northampton County Northumberland
 County Oak Lane Olde Towne East Ocean County **Orange** Passaic County
Parkside Paterson **Pennsauken** **PENNSYLVANIA** Perry County
Perth Armboy **Philadelphia** Philadelphia County **Phillipsburg**
 Pike County Plainfield Point Breeze Potter County **Pottstown**
Pottsville Reading **Salem** Salem County Schuylkill Schuylkill County
Scranton Snyder County Sparrow Run Spruce Street Somerset County
 South Duke Street **Southeast Gateway** Southeast York
Southwest Lancaster Sullivan County Susquehanna County Sussex County
 Tabor **The Good Lands** Tioga County **Toms River** Trenton Union County
 Unity Square Upper Clinton Hill Vailsburg Valley **Vineland**
Voorhees Walnut Hill Warren County Wayne County West Center City
 West End West Powelton West Side **West Ward** Wilkes Barre
 Wilmington **Wrightstown** Wyoming County York York County

