

Neighborhood
Revitalization and
Public Safety
Transition
Committee Report
Appendix

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Appendix A: Neighborhood Revitalization and Public Safety Committee Members

First Name	Last Name	Organization / Neighborhood
Chalres	Ball	Regional Planning Commission
Alfred	Bell	Jefferson County Juvenile Probation
LaKenya	Bend	Bend & Associates
Robin	Boyd-Clark	Central City Neighborhood
Raymond	Brooks	Former Bham Fire Chief
Willie	Brown	
Diane	Cain	Five Points West Community
Rev. John	Cantelow	Sixth Ave Baptist Church
Scott	Capps	Glen Iris Neighborhood Association
Paul	Carruthers	Regions Bank
Carol	Clark	SouthSide Development Company
Kellie	Clark	Birmingham Resident
Grace	Cortez	College Student
Christopher	Daniel	Sheffield & Letine P.C.
Samuetta	Drew	Smithfield / College Hills
Kevin	Dunn	Alabama Board of Pardons and Parole
Jerry	Durham	SecureView LLC
Te'Andria	Ellis	Iberia Bank / The Surge Project
David	Germany	Regions Bank
Braxton	Goodrich	Woodlawn United
Brian	Gunn	Norwood Neighborhood
Johnny	Gunn	Five Points West Community
Alan	Gurganus	Alabama Environmental Council
Herschell	Hamilton	BLOC Global
Richard	Harris	South Pratt Neighborhood
John	Harris	North Titusville Neighborhood

Gus	Heard - Hughes	Community Foundation
Archibald	Hill	Titusville Community Development Corp.,
Jaclynn	Maxwell Hudson	
Chervis	Isom	Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC
Natasha	Ivory	Roebuck Neighborhood / Project Possible
Ryan	Jackson	City of Bham Civic Engagement
Kevin	Jaquess	
AJ	Johnson	City of Birmingham / Boots on the Ground
Sandi	Johnson	
Wilbur	Johnson	Alabama Power
Arielle	Jones	Grad Student, UA
Joseph	Jones	Jefferson County
LeDon	Jones	National Bank of Commerce
Zhaundra	Jones	Community Foundation
Marlon	King	BLOC Global
Bernadette	Lang	Birmingham Resident
Seth	Lewis	UAB Police Department, Patrol Division
Wendell	Major	Jefferson County Sheriff
Tim	Majors	Bham Stands
Patrick	Mardis	Chief of Police, Tuskegee University
Mark	Martin	Build UP
Carmen	Mays	West End Resident
Van	Moody	The Worship Center
Jeremiah	Mosley	RILEY & JACKSON, P.C.
Lynn	Murphree	Glen Iris/Southside Neighborhood / VIVA Health
Darlene	Negrotto	Vulcan Park & Museum
Stan	Palla	Highland Neighborhood
Demetrius	Paschel	Paschel Productions
Det. Ralph	Patterson	Birmingham Police Department
Paula	Pino	UAB Sustainable Cities

Ben	Podbielski	Protective Life Insurance
Edwin	Revell	City of Birmingham, Planning, Engineering and Permits
Kimberly	Richardson	Kim Richardson Consulting
Courtney	Riles	UAB Student
Nigel	Roberts	City of Birmingham, Community Development Director
Marcella	Roberts	M. Roberts & Associates
Max	Rykov	Birmingham City Council Public Information Office
Chasiti	Shepherd	BGrace Media
Dora	Sims	Five Points West Community
Toni	Smoke	Smoke Law LLC
Ellen	Spencer	CAB / Pratt Community
Joyce	Spielberger	Forest Park/South Avondale
Paula	Stanton	JCCEO
Matt	Stoops	Sain, Civil Engineer
Walladean	Streeter	Bush Hill Neighborhood Association
James	Sullivan	Millen Forward
Michelle	Tate	BPD
LaTonya	Tate	Florida Department of Corrections
Joanice	Thompson	Bush Hill Neighborhood Association
Glennon	Threatt	Federal Public Defenders Office
Wesley	Vaughn	Retail Strategies
Larry	Watts	
Bobby	Young	LGE Events Birmingham

Appendix B: First Meeting Synopsis and Report 12-14-17

Neighborhood Revitalization & Public Safety Committee Report

Meeting Synopsis

Date: November 30, 2017

Location: Medical Forum, Room E

Attendance: ~ 40

After brief introductions, we began our meeting by stating the goals of the Neighborhood Revitalization and Public Safety Committee: (1) Evaluation of City Services, (2) Identification of Best Practices, (3) Developing Metrics, and (4) Submitting a plan to the Mayor once the transition term is concluded. We then went through the applicable sections of *The Woodfin Plan* taking care to go through each point to ensure members understood the vision of the new administration. Next, we gave a high-level overview of the Departmental/Agency Reviews that we had completed by that time. Lastly, we covered what level of participation we expected from each member.

During the meeting, it became apparent that people had two glaring expectations: (1) to be heard & (2) to work. A good portion of our meeting was cathartic for people that had not been heard or excluded from participating meaningfully in their community's development. Many themes emerged from the conversations, chief among them was the desire to move beyond plans and get to outcomes. So it was important for us to reframe how we are going to move forward. In order to effectively utilize the enthusiasm and skills of our members, we are going to have to focus on solutions that can be accomplished both before and after the 100-day mark. We are also going to have to engage them more meaningfully and more often.

To that end, we are creating a subcommittee of Solution Team Leaders. These SLTs will lead a group of 5-7 people and create short and long-term solutions around an assigned theme. We will also do neighborhood visits to aid in the authenticity of discussions and desired results. Our next step is to meet with the SLTs, solidify themes, assign teams, and set the next full committee meeting.

Demolition Map

We commissioned PEP to create a map of the demolished properties and new construction since 2010. It illustrates what was echoed by the members in attendance. We need a building strategy implemented simultaneously with demolition; not only for policy implications but also aesthetics and morale.

Transition Readiness Questionnaire Reviews

We have completed 12 review meetings and have received completed Questionnaires from 11.
The last is expected by the end of the week*.

List of Departments / Agencies:

Birmingham Land Bank*

Community Development

Crossplex

Equipment Management

Fire and Rescue

Housing Authority

Municipal Court

Parks and Rec

Planning, Engineering, and Permits

Police

Public Works

Traffic Engineering

Appendix C: Theme Evaluation Rubric

Theme Evaluation Rubric

What is your theme?

Choose a Theme

Theme SWOT Analysis

We need Solution Teams to take a deep dive into the theme they have chosen. In your analysis, peel back the layers until you get to the root cause. It is at the root that we see fundamental change.

1) Strengths

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2) Weaknesses

[Click here to enter text.](#)

3) Opportunities

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4) Threats

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Define your theme and opportunities.

After you have discussed and analyzed your theme, define it and list up to 5 opportunities (problems) you will solve for.

1) Define Your Theme

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2) State The Opportunities (Problems)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

List Best Practices

Remember, just because you like it or it works somewhere else doesn't make it a Best Practice. Choose programs, projects and initiatives that can be implemented here within our existing reality. Share the titles and short descriptions of the programs, projects, and initiatives you have chosen.

1) Title and Short Description

[Click here to enter text.](#)

5) Title and Short Description

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2) Title and Short Description

[Click here to enter text.](#)

3) Title and Short Description

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4) Title and Short Description

[Click here to enter text.](#)

5) Title and Short Description

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Best Practice Evaluation

Now that you have chosen Best Practices, be mindful to evaluate them on Equity, Resilience and Innovation.

1) Equity - How does it affect and include the most vulnerable? Is there Restorative Justice?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2) Resilience - In the event of a disaster, how quickly does it bounce back or adapt? Is this a plan for what to do if something goes wrong?

Click here to enter text.

3) Innovation - How does this change a process or outcome for the better in ways unknown before? How is technology integrated in this solution?

Click here to enter text.

Best Practices Links

List links of the best practices you have found.

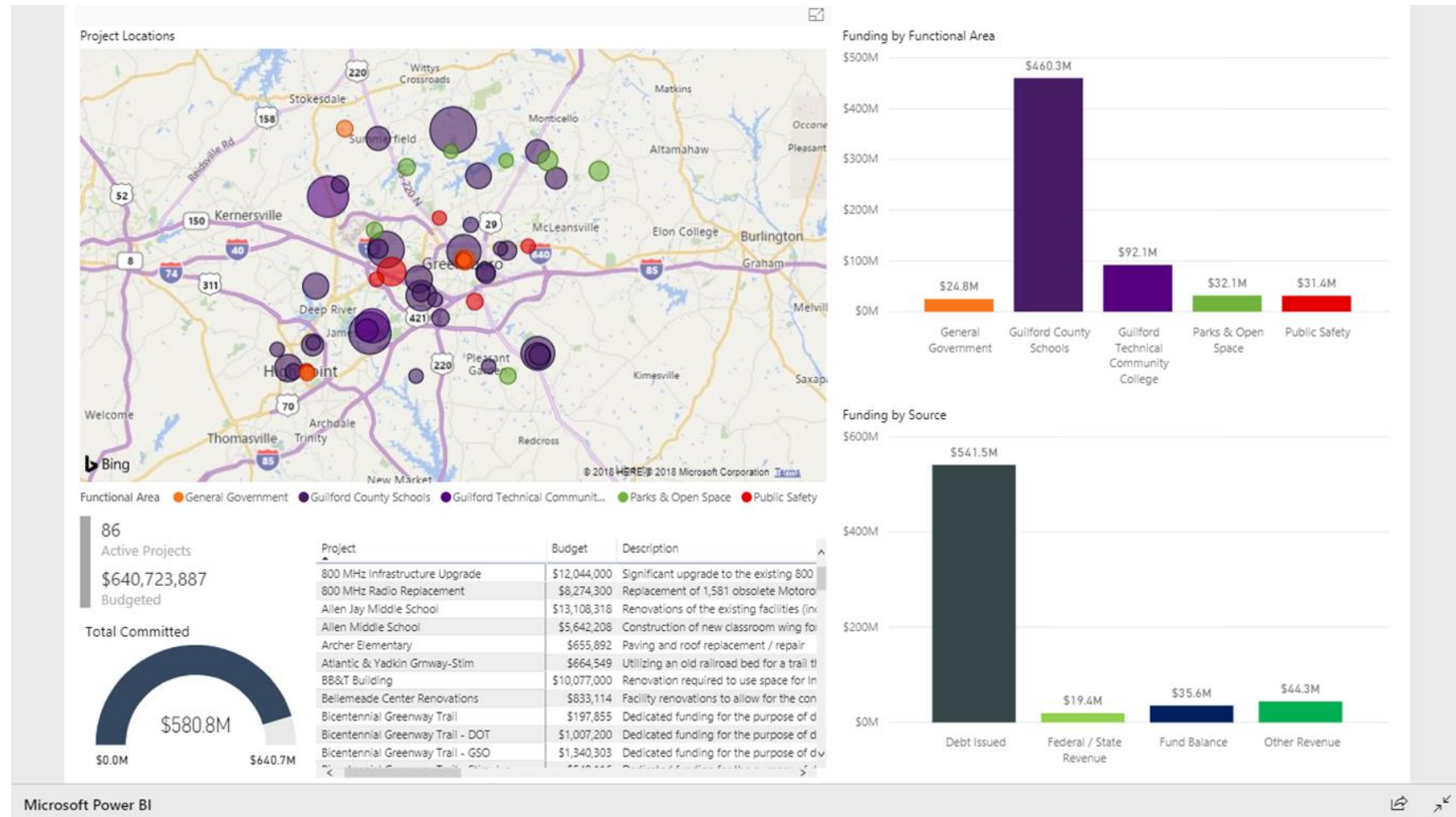
Click here to enter text.

Appendix D: Pubic Safety Plan

- Need for juvenile intervention and diversion programs to reduce the number of “at risk” youth who go on to become adult offenders
- Need for adult offender reentry programs to reduce recidivism.
- Community Policing – restoration of police/ community communication and confidence to make neighborhoods feel safe and reduce crime.
- Police Resourcing – increasing police department resources to increase police morale, training, retention and performance metrics.
- Increase Regional Interaction and Cooperation for Public Safety.
- Crime reduction
- Increased police/community cooperation
- Safer neighborhoods
- Regional cooperation
- Predictive policing
- US Marshall’s Gulf States Regional Task Force
- Helping Montgomery Families Initiative
- National Reentry Resource Center

Appendix E: Where's the Money

Below is an example of a spending dashboard. The object of this committee is to bring transparency to city government by identifying available sources of funds within the City of Birmingham used to support Community and Economic Development initiatives. We have a unique opportunity to research the sources, amount and use of the federal funds received by the City of Birmingham's Department of Community Development used to support Community and Economic Development efforts.



Appendix F: Housing Production

Housing Production

The primary goal of the Housing Production Process is to consider all the housing needs in the City of Birmingham and create a roadmap that can focus, link, and leverage all available resources toward stabilizing and increasing the supply of affordable housing as well as market rate housing in the City of Birmingham.

The housing priorities in Birmingham include, but are not limited to:

- Creating new homeownership opportunities for people with incomes between 50% to 80% of median family income.
- Creating affordable rental housing for people with incomes at or below 80% of median (paying less than or equal to 30% of their incomes in rent).
- Addressing housing for the homeless.
- Stimulating market rate housing opportunities.
- Continue to work with the Housing Authority of the Birmingham District (HABD) to stimulate and encourage the redevelopment of public housing developments and create homeownership housing opportunities for public housing residents.
- Develop strong, high capacity and successful non-profit housing development entities working hyper locally to rehab and develop housing and help existing homeowners maintain their homes.
- Increase collaborative partnerships with qualified for profit and non-profit developers to improve existing housing via rehabilitation and the development of new housing units.
- Development of sound and sustainable solutions to recapture abandoned units and return these to housing service.
- Development of innovative strategies to provide down payment assistance for qualified low and moderate income (LMI) households.
- Development of soft second mortgages that addresses the disparity of market construction prices with affordability.

A well-thought through and long term strategy to the City of Birmingham's housing and revitalization efforts must be created which will have clarity and coherence in its housing programs. Consistency and cooperation among all stakeholders is necessary to produce viable and long term solutions. Greater and

more successful partnerships will be needed with the private sector and qualified nonprofits to increase the supply of housing in Birmingham. Resources from the City of Birmingham's CDBG, City General Revenue, bond funding opportunities, the state of Alabama's Alabama Housing Finance Authority (AHFA), local and national foundations, Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta and Dallas and other resources will be critical to Birmingham's success of stabilizing and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Affordable Housing

The production of affordable housing (homeownership as well as rental) generally requires subsidies that enable the housing to be affordable for those earning 80% or less than the median family income. The 2017, the median family income in the Birmingham MSA was \$61,400 with 80% equating to \$49,120 for median family income for LMI. Subsidies that enable housing affordability typically comes from city CDBG, HOME funds, bond funding, local down payment assistance programs, low income housing tax credits (LIHTC), soft monies provided by local and/or national foundations and are leveraged with private capital.

The City of Birmingham has had some success with adding new affordable multi-family rental housing stock by leveraging its public capital with equity provided via the LIHTC program. Examples include Wood Station in Woodlawn, the redevelopment of public housing developments such as Park Place, Loveman Village, and Tuxedo Terrace; YWCA's downtown housing development, Bankhead Towers, Avondale Gardens, and many others. With a limited supply of public dollars, the City of Birmingham must look to strategically leverage outside resources to increase the supply of affordable housing.

The City's success with programs that aid rehabilitation and new construction of detached affordable single-family housing has been occasional and marginal, at best, with scalable models being much more difficult to point to. Habitat Blitzes have placed several new units on larger parcels in neighborhoods like a former public school site in western Birmingham (Fairview) and, more recently, the Cascade Plunge site on the east side. However, demolition has taken a toll on neighborhood fabric leaving small scattered sites of one lot here and there, and a different strategy is needed to restore the basic fabric for many areas by creating in-fill development that fits well with the existing stock. A good example of the latter can be found in 24 in-fill new

construction and rehabilitated houses in the Fountain Heights neighborhood, completed by HABD approximately 10 years ago.

Rental Housing

The Alabama Housing Finance Authority (AHFA) LIHTC program is the single largest single source to leverage local resources with private capital to create affordable rental housing. LIHTCs can be used for new construction as well as for renovation of properties into affordable housing. In addition, these can be combined with federal and state historic tax credits. The AHFA will only allocate one to two 9% LIHTC allocations annually in Jefferson County, based on their policy of one award per county per grant round. Advocating to increase the annual 9% LIHTC allocation to high population centers in the state is desperately needed. There have been instances where several worthy Jefferson County (Birmingham) projects applied for the 9% credit, but only one project could get funded, so the other “good” deals evaporated for lack of timely subsidy availability. Applications for the competitive 9% LIHTC can cost developers in the range of \$40,000 per project. This is a policy issue worthy of local government focus, perhaps in collaboration with other population centers across the State of Alabama. (4% LIHTC credits remain readily available but can be more difficult to use).

To be successful, 9% LIHTC applications require a letter of support from the local government. Historically, the city has given everyone applying a LIHTC development an AHFA required support letter to keep the playing field level, but there is also the opportunity to be selective a support a favored application for a given LIHTC round. The City of Birmingham should create a proactive and ongoing plan to strategically look for key opportunities to implement and leverage city resources to create affordable rental opportunities with the LIHTC program. This strategic approach will enable the City of Birmingham to guide future significant affordable housing developments which will help stimulate neighborhood revitalization. Vacant properties and other properties should be strategically examined for suitability and considered for options and/or acquisition for developers to apply for LIHTC. In addition to traditional townhouse and apartment style developments, other opportunities include: redevelopment of existing buildings; detached single family style developments on property that is created to be platted into single family housing and that could be sold to the tenants after the 15-year

compliance period has expired; unused municipal properties and vacant school building offer opportunities to strategically consider LIHTC development.

The City of Birmingham should also examine using its resources to assist in the rehabilitation and development of smaller rental affordable housing opportunities with qualified for profit and nonprofit developers.

Public Housing

The City of Birmingham must continue to work closely with the Housing Authority of the Birmingham District (HABD) to assist in their mission of providing affordable temporary shelter for those who have no other housing alternative. Many public housing residents have experienced multiple generations of families who have continuously used public housing as their only place of shelter. The City of Birmingham has and will continue to work closely with HABD in creating the redevelopment of public housing properties to develop programs aimed at self-sufficiency. The redevelopment of Park Place (formerly Metropolitan Gardens), Tuxedo Terrace and Loveman Village are excellent examples which is transforming public housing, creating new opportunities for residents and revitalizing these communities.

Homeownership

Creating homeownership opportunities for affordable generally requires subsidies that enable the units to be affordable for LMI families. Subsidies such as down payment assistance can help people with little savings achieve homeownership. Subsidies that create “soft second” mortgages also help make housing affordable by filling the gap between new construction cost and an affordable price points. Many cities have used these resources to assist LMI persons become homeowners and the City of Birmingham must explore these avenues and create viable products than can increase homeownership opportunities for LMI persons.

Examples include:

Down payment Assistance (DPA): Using CDBG, HOME, City General Revenue, Bond proceeds, local and/or national foundations, etc. – create \$500,000 pool that can provide up to \$5,000 for DPA for individual homebuyers. This should stimulate the creation of 100 new homebuyers.

Soft Second Mortgages: Using CDBG, HOME, City General Revenue, Bond proceeds, local and/or national foundations, etc. – create a down payment assistance program that can provide a soft second mortgage to credit qualified LMI homebuyers which will enable them to become homeowners. In addition, having this resource will stimulate the production of housing which will add to the City’s population and tax base.

Example of affordability:

House Development Cost	\$200,000
minus \$30,000 soft second	<u>-30,000</u>
Mortgage amount:	\$175,000

Affordable to LMI households making \$50,000/year

\$3,000,000 pool needed for 100 units

Housing for the Homeless

For Birmingham’s most vulnerable population – the homeless – understand the needs of the service providers and provide support to their efforts to improve and/or expand their housing and service facilities.

Market Rate Housing (Middle and Upper Income)

Market rate housing is an important component of healthy, vibrant, and viable communities. The City of Birmingham must evaluate how it can stimulate housing for this cohort with financing options, incentives to stimulate production. There are little, if any, subsidies that are available for middle and upper income housing, so the City must look for creative avenues to inspire the development as well as create a market for middle and upper income households.

Avenues to consider include, but are not limited to:

- Encouraging affordable housing development to include set aside units for middle and upper income households.
- Providing the public infrastructure necessary to stimulate investment in new housing developments that provide housing opportunities for middle and upper income households.

Reaching Market Sustainability in older established neighborhoods – meaning to reach a point where the market value (and appraised value) of a residential unit and the cost of building become equalized so that governmental subsidizes are no longer needed to produce and sell the housing unit. Currently, in many neighborhood markets in the City of Birmingham, the cost to construct a home or purchase and remodel a home, exceed the appraised value so, to create market demand and viability, subsidies are needed (in the form of soft second mortgages) that enable the house to be sold to meet the appraisal expectations of the mortgage industry. (For example, if the total development cost to build a home is \$100,000, but the appraisals in the surrounding neighborhoods will only sustain an appraised value of \$80,000, then \$20,000 in subsidies are needed to stimulate the market for buyers (i.e. “prime the pump”).

Realizing the market challenges, the City should consider incorporating a “soft second mortgage program as noted above to sufficiently “prime the pump” in neighborhoods in sufficient volume so that appraisal values rise to meet the market realities of total development cost plus transaction cost will equal the sales price. Creating a strategic plan to “prime the pump” with a sufficient number of units in carefully selected neighborhood should have the desired effect and enable the market to function from that point without governmental subsidies. While value equalization could take a few years and with substantial governmental subsidies, once stabilized, governmental subsidies should no longer be needed and the focus can shift to another strategic area.

Community Development Corporations

Currently there are several organizations whose mission includes the development of affordable housing. These organizations have access to public and private funding that assist with administration as well as housing production financing. The City of Birmingham should closely examine and consider how to support and/or expand community development corporations which can leverage resources to produce affordable housing.

Preventing the Demolition of Existing Housing that is feasible for Rehabilitation

Saving existing housing stock from demolition and creating a pathway for these units to be sold/given to qualified nonprofits, qualified homebuyers and qualified for-profit developers who

have the wherewithal to make the necessary repairs and bring a house up to code so that the house can again provide viable housing stock.

Some years ago, legislation was passed that gives the city an alternative to demolition of condemned structures. The legislation was designed to help prevent “demolition by neglect” to encourage public or private investment in vacant and abandoned residential structures. Under the law, an investor could make improvements even while seeking to clear title and any redemption by the fee simple owner would have to make the investor whole plus an additional 12%.

This legislation must be revisited and revised as necessary to make this a viable program and very reactive to the time sensitive demands of real estate transactions such that clear title can be passed with the property. In addition, a process must be included that will evaluate an applicant’s fiscal ability and appropriate experience to assure that rehabilitation will be successful and within a defined time period.

The City should consider the development and implementation of a “Residential Anti-Neglect Ordinance” which will not only protect the integrity of neighborhoods, but will allow the City of Birmingham to seize neglected and abandoned properties. This ordinance would allow the city to claim abandoned properties that are suitable for rehabilitation. The seized properties can then be given or sold to non-profits and for profits as well as qualified potential owner-occupant homeowners for a nominal amount. As noted above, the recipient should have to demonstrate capacity and experience.

Strategy: Getting Consumers Ready to be Qualified Homebuyers and Renters

Objective: Birmingham consumers must understand the importance of credit and its impact on their ability to rent housing, to a purchase a home, its role employment evaluation and the purchase of insurance as well as other consumer products. A well informed consumer who proactively addresses their credit concerns will become a critical component to matching them with rental housing and/or homeownership opportunities. Birmingham property owners must also understand how properties transfer at death with a will (testate) or without a will (intestate). Properties involved without wills creates many challenges for families and for communities should the properties become blighting influences.

Birmingham has existing organizations who have HUD certified counselors and counselors who are trained in educating consumers about the importance of credit and can provide a platform for the City of Birmingham to create strong relationships. These organizations can provide the critical services necessary to create educated and credit worthy consumers who are prepared to rent or purchase existing and future housing opportunities. These organizations include: Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham; JCCEO; Hope Inside; UAB's Regions Financial Educational Institute; Legal Aid, and the Birmingham Bar Association.

Another opportunity exists to educate consumers on the various programs available for homeownership and creating homeownership opportunities via property available through the Land Bank, how contractors work and how to choose a contractor and how to obtain construction and acquisition and construction of new housing or for renovation.

A communication plan should be created to consistently inform the public about these educational and assistance opportunities with local organizations as well as the importance of credit and will creation. Engaging existing and potential City of Birmingham residents to become credit savvy/worthy will create a consistent and critical pipeline of qualified consumers to meet the expected increase of housing opportunities in the City of Birmingham.

Key Results Area:

- Establish rapport with the existing organizations in the City of Birmingham who are providing credit counseling and education to determine their capacity and commitment to engage in this effort.
- Create programs to educate the public on Land Bank opportunities, contracting and financing opportunities.
- Create ongoing communications strategy and plan to inform existing and aspiring City of Birmingham residents about the need for good credit and where to go for credit education, counseling, and credit repair as well as the need for property owners to create wills.

- Create awareness programs for the need for wills and create partnerships with Legal Aid and/or volunteer lawyers who can prepare wills that address wishes with real estate transfers.

Leveraging Dollars

To make significant strides in stabilizing and increasing the supply of all housing in the City of Birmingham, it is critical that the City of Birmingham seek to leverage its resources with available resources such as the LIHTC noted above. Due to the tremendous cost of redevelopment efforts, subsidies will be required to stimulate the market, enable housing to be affordable and create redevelopment opportunities.

The City of Birmingham must become very aggressive in the pursuit of funding opportunities from local, state, and federal resources as well as look to local and national foundations that would have an interest and mission to help Birmingham with revitalization and housing development. Below are examples to consider that will help the City leverage its funding and resources:

- Explore all parameters with the city's bonding opportunities for housing and for neighborhood infrastructure improvements.
- Engage the AHFA for increased LHITC allocations in high need cities like Birmingham.
- Explore local foundation interest and support for housing and redevelopment opportunities and seek their interest in directing opportunities with national foundations who may have an interest in supporting housing and redevelopment efforts in Birmingham (Kresge, Ford, Bloomberg, Babcock, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Warren Buffet, etc.).

Strategic Planning

The City of Birmingham should consider creating development opportunities by finding key potential key development sites, create development concepts, perform site acquisition, evaluate and address required infrastructure improvements and create financial programming to enable a development to be feasible. Developers could be solicited via Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposals and evaluated based on typical qualifications such as experience, financial capacity and strength, ability to mobilize, etc.

Non-LMI transactions

See attached for HMDA transaction in the City of Birmingham for middle and upper income families from 2014 -2016.

Appendix G: Culture

Culture

Birmingham is the seat of the civil rights movement. Birmingham is a city with roots and history related to the industrial sector. Birmingham will host the World Games providing international visibility. Birmingham can retain/expand cultural engagement for more visibility and inclusion of all its residents.

Opportunities

- Create more opportunities for students and residents to identify personal gifts and talents. (Instead of focusing on STEM we need to focus on STEAM, in which the “A” includes the arts.)
- Rebrand the civil rights struggle to include global opportunities for understanding. (The civil rights of the past needs to be expanded to include global human rights.)
- Increase the visibility and information related to soccer, athletics, and communication as part of the World Games. Identify opportunities to maximize import/export commerce and cultural exchanges globally.
- Provide ways to engage residents in a more active way around culture by giving them opportunities for direct involvement. Create, implement and activate arts councils to boost neighborhood pride and spur public art campaigns. THINK TANKS.

Best Practices

- **Review and redistribution of city resources** - Boost public safety and direct services for residents. Review the distribution, utilization and application of city services like law enforcement, and maximize protection and services for residents/tax payers.
- **Government as the umbrella organization to lead culture** - Government needs to take the lead in developing cultural hubs. Arts, humanities, historic preservation, economic development, and culture are connected in ways to boost revenues for cities through development and tourism. Savannah, Charleston and Amsterdam, Netherlands (the THINK program). They all had the challenges of linking culture and creative sectors: the lack of entrepreneurial and business skills. They all developed comprehensive programs led by government to explore creative ways to seed, fund, and grow culture.

- **Cultural Incubators/hubs and districts** - Art, culture and humanities incubators. Provide districts and havens for identifying, retaining, and recruiting artists. Barcelona has transformations orchestrated by the city in recent decades where they use old industrial factories for new cultural spaces. Part of the transformation was driven by major events hosted by the city (from the 1992 Olympic Games to the 2004 International Forum of Culture, hosted in the Montjiuc and Diagonal areas). They also made major investment in cultural infrastructure. Barcelona Art Factories aims to foster and promote professional creative activities via innovative collaboration between artists, creative professionals and the public. Barcelona Art Factories benefits from diversified financial contributions. Approximately 70% of the budget comes from municipal funds, complemented by Community funds (10%), private funds (10%), national funds (5%) and EU funds (5%).
- **Public Art, culture and design as an economic engine** - There are opportunities to create greater displays to expand the public arts program in the city of Birmingham. Utilizing the combined efforts of the Art Schools, fine arts programs, and community/public involvement networks and advisory councils. The national governors' association has looked at art, culture and design as means to boost economic engines through human capital development and improve distressed areas. Ways to provide rapid growth with existing talent, drives more innovation in industry markets already identified as leading, links necessary partners to support talent development, catalyzes community revitalization, and cultivates a better workforce. The City Hall Rotunda Gallery is managed by the City of Savannah's Art, Culture and Historical Resources Division. This venue offers exhibitions that showcase the Savannah community and highlight the Savannah landscape. The gallery is host to two 6-month shows per year.
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Appendix H: No More Plans

1. The City needs to work harder to avoid developing additional plans where useful ones already exist.
2. The City should always earmark sufficient funds for the successful implementation of plans and hold responsible Departments or other entities accountable for implementation.
3. The Mayor should have one person that is knowledgeable about the plans that exist within the City administration proper as well as those completed or under development in City-chartered entities such as the BJCTA, the BAA, BWWB, BJCC, etc. The activities of these autonomous entities play a vital role in the success or failure of the City as an economic unit.
4. When plans must be developed by the City or City-chartered entities, it should not be developed or implemented in silos. All interested parties should be communicating regularly.

THEME EVALUATION RUBRIC RESPONSES

THEME: No More Plans

STRENGTHS: The City of Birmingham is a major metropolitan city with a manageable size that has a number of fully functioning, well-staffed but marginally-funded departments and independent agencies. Each entity including the Birmingham Water Works, Airport Authority, City and County Planning Departments has its own set of elaborate master plans.

WEAKNESSES: There are too many plans by too many governmental entities and there is little or no connectivity nor a central document or person that connects them all.

OPPORTUNITIES: There is an opportunity to merge city and county departments as well as an opportunity to create a guiding policy document for small towns, unincorporated areas, and fringe areas around urban centers. These documents should be incorporated and implemented under both the City and County "Capital Improvements Plan and Program".

THREATS: In 1948, there was referenda that failed to approve a consolidation of city and county governments by voters. However, there has not been an attempt to merge specific departments and agencies for an overarching cause.

THEME DEFINED: Merge the City of Birmingham and Jefferson County departments as a unified governmental agency including Floodplain Administration, Planning, GIS, Engineering, and Codes with input by Birmingham Water Works and the Airport Authority implemented in a project management fashion to uniformly administer professional services to residents and businesses within the city and county proper providing guiding developmental technical policies and professional analysis.

OPPORTUNITIES: Eliminate redundancies and save money by also creating a more cohesive and well planned area as implemented in most States with mandatory statewide planning.

LIST BEST PRACTICES:

Use the following jurisdictions as case studies:

- Tallahassee City / Leon County
- Jacksonville City / Duval County
- Nashville City / Davidson County
- Miami City / Dade County
- Athens City / Clark County

BEST PRACTICE EVALUATION:

Equity - A central merger would benefit residents and businesses by bringing to bear professional services and people on overarching issues never realized. It would also create a more cohesive community as shown in States with mandatory planning.

Resilience - This merger would be particularly beneficial in the event of disaster if worked in a project management format.

Innovation - This merger would change processes and outcomes. Project management teams would consist of 1 person from each department or agency dependent upon the issue.

BEST PRACTICES LINK AND / OR DOCUMENTS:

Link(s)-

- Creating Project Management Teams:
 - <https://www.cio.com/article/2375821/project-management/how-to-create-high-performing-project-management-teams.html>
- Consolidation Comparative Analysis
 - <https://web.archive.org/web/20080229163653/http://www.allegheenyconference.org/PEL/PDFs/CityCountyConsolidationsComparativeAnalysis.pdf>
 - <https://web.archive.org/web/20120719083354/http://www.naco.org/Counties/Documents/City%20County%20Consolidations.01.01.2011.pdf>

Having sat in on numerous planning sessions recently, from the comp plan to the framework plan to smaller neighborhood masterplan; I'd like to mention a couple things that I've gleaned from it all.

1. The community is tired of planning. This is the resounding sentiment from neighborhood to neighborhood. Residents have seen plans come & go, and come ago again with little to no action or implementation.
2. Plans operate and are created in silos. Plans are created through entities/ organizations that rarely communicate to one another. (Ex. Birmingham Airport Authority may have a plan that never communicates with BJCTA)
3. There are agenda whether political or non-partisan that exist that prevent plans from being implemented.
4. There's no statewide planning organization that lobby for legislation to benefit plans.
5. Lastly there's no convener of the plans at city hall to make sure they are echoing and sharing the city's comprehensive plans.

One city that I can think of immediately, right in our own backyard, is Huntsville, Alabama. They are taking their masterplans and implementing them expeditiously after concept.

<https://www.huntsvilleal.gov/revealing-new-downtown-master-plan/>

Appendix I: Healthy Competitive Neighborhoods

Shape Birmingham: <https://www.shapebham.com/>

WHAT WE ARE SOLVING FOR...

- The Lack of ongoing collaborations, planning and implementation among all entities interested in the Revitalization of Birmingham Communities
- The lack of utilization of available data sources by the collective group interested in Revitalizing Birmingham Communities
- The blighted land and property across the Birmingham community
- For the support needed to enhance the education system of Birmingham City Schools and the Community at large

BEST PRACTICES

1. CREATING AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REVITALIZATION

Mayor Woodfin Office of Community Revitalization

- a) Following the established model between the UAB Sustainable Smart Cities Research Center and the City of Birmingham



- a) Leveraging University Resources for Community Revitalization By David J. Wright - Director, Urban and Metropolitan Studies
http://www.rockinst.org/observations/wrightd/2010-05-university_community.aspx

BEST PRACTICES

2. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



- The Sustainable Smart Cities Youth Champions program provides inner-city youth with hands-on learning opportunities about the responsible management of natural resources and how it improves the quality of life for present and future generations
- The program consists of four visits to UAB scheduled on Saturdays. Each Saturday, one of the following topics within sustainability will be addressed:
 - ❖ Sustainable Transportation and Energy Conservation
 - ❖ Environmental Quality
 - ❖ Field Trip*
 - ❖ Health and Livability of Cities
- Students will learn how to incorporate these topics into their day to day life

BEST PRACTICES

3. BLIGHT DOMAIN

Turning Liabilities into Assets

Goal: Turn Abandoned land into Productive Green Spaces such as Community Gardens and Recreational Parks

Benefits: Potential benefits by implementing Green Spaces

- Provide aesthetic benefits
- Target Food Deserts by providing fresh, healthy produce to neighbors
- Increase safety
- Improve soil, water, and air quality and increase biodiversity
- Support neighborhood economic development by increasing property values
- Provide educational opportunities for kids, adults, and seniors
- Promote individual health by offering physical activity, stress relief, and a connection to nature
- Promote public health by giving people a space to congregate and define themselves as a community



<http://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2017/july/parks-and-recreation-serving-a-growing-older->

BEST PRACTICES

4. WALKABILITY AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

Programs with MHRC

Walking and walkability provide a variety of **benefits**, including basic mobility, consumer cost savings, cost savings (reduced external costs), efficient land use, community livability, improved fitness and public health, economic development, and support for equity objectives.

What makes a neighborhood walkable?

- **A center:** Walkable neighborhoods have a center, whether it's a main street or a public space.
- **People:** Enough people for businesses to flourish and for public transit to run frequently.
- **Mixed income, mixed use:** Affordable housing located near businesses.
- **Parks and public space:** Plenty of public places to gather and play.
- **Pedestrian design:** Buildings are close to the street, parking lots are relegated to the back.
- **Schools and workplaces:** Close enough that most residents can walk from their homes.
- **Complete streets:** Streets designed for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit.

Economic Value of Walkability

<http://vtpi.org/walkability.pdf>

Appendix J: Covenants + Capacity Building + Partnerships

CAPACITY BUILDING

Strategy

Working cross-sectorial partnerships between public, private, and non-profit groups must be established as part of coherent long-term housing strategies that reflect a shared vision for housing and community development in the city of Birmingham. Without proper coordination and not supporting any larger goal or strategy for the city.

OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

- Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) have played an enduring and innovative role in the improvement of distressed neighborhoods across the city for the past three decades. These organizations are well attuned to the views of local residents in the communities they serve, and serve as a linchpin towards accessing special set asides from Federal Housing funds. However, in recent years, many of these developers have become severely fiscally strained. Even small numbers of cash-draining properties can result in existential crises for CDCs, and the high risk nature of non profit and affordable housing development and unpredictable market conditions have posed major challenges for the viability of many such groups. Additionally, many organizations faltered when they tried to grow or expand into new roles.
- A lack of revenue-stream diversity seems to affect small and mid-sized non-profit organizations the most. As their development pipelines slow, fees are no longer earned, impacting the organization's ability to continue to operate. In some cases, additional capacity and access to resources such as private capital could significantly expand their direct market impact.
- The City should work towards the attraction of retention of various groups in targeted neighborhoods, in hopes of bringing commitment and resources to those areas. In neighborhoods with an oversupply of housing and weak demand, it is necessary to find ways to generate new demand and slow resident attrition, or see these neighborhoods sink into further decline. With potential homebuyers and renters under financial constraints,

there is general downward pressure on home values that results in declining interest towards homes in distressed areas. Properties with declining values become increasingly physically distressed as owners see little benefit to maintaining or rehabilitating them, and developers have no incentive to target these neighborhoods because they cannot anticipate a reasonable return on investment or acquire necessary debt financing. With people tending to leave these neighborhoods in large numbers, and residents often increasingly temporary or transient, the social connections of communities often decay. Initiatives focused on making targeted neighborhoods places where existing residents want to stay and new residents want to live are needed to ensure that they move in the right direction.

Encourage Linkages Through Community Engagement

The City should sponsor activities that promote a cross-functional, collaborative neighborhood culture in which neighborhood resources are collectively shared and enhanced. This should include the organization of neighborhood-based conferences that provide technical training and networking opportunities for community leaders, residents, investors and other stakeholders, which can serve to enhance working relationships and build mutual trust between various stakeholders in targeted neighborhoods. At these events, the City should publicize relevant programs and strategies and introduce trusted partners to neighborhood groups and representatives.

Train Industry Professionals on New Strategies, Incentives and Marketing Approaches

Changing and challenging the public perceptions of troubled neighborhoods is a long-term goal of the City. Reshaping the image of a neighborhood is a necessary step towards creating the conditions that can bring independent private actors to invest in a community. Too often, local governments and community organizations give short shrift to the importance of improving a neighborhood's image at the expense of other agendas.

Real estate professionals, including agents, developers and builders, are important players, as they make many of their decisions and investments based on the popular images and perceptions of specific neighborhoods. Lingering image problems in a community deter activity and

investment there. Many real estate professionals learn about plans and projects through publications or hearsay, with many promising investments going unmade because of a lack of awareness of an opportunity, advantage, or unmet need that would require local, specific knowledge to uncover.

A partnership between the city and these professionals would include regular engagement of trade groups, and elicitation of their support in the focused marketing of targeted areas. There are often individuals and households who would find superior location, proximity to jobs, historic character, and other assets in a given neighborhood, but are discouraged by images or perceptions that may be out of date or inaccurate. Real estate professionals who are specifically trained to market certain properties and areas can generate increased demand for Trending and Transitional Investment Areas with largely unmet market potential.

Market segmentation and advanced third-party data should be used to market and brand various neighborhoods to maximize residential absorption. Messages can be carefully tailored based on the characteristics of neighborhoods and the consumer preferences of various demographic segments of the population.

The City should organize a real estate roundtable with realtors, developers, and builders that address issues and strategies surrounding the targeted neighborhoods. They should also organize training sessions about housing programs, incentives, and strategies, explaining how they can be navigated and harnessed in manners beneficial to both the real estate community and the targeted communities

Facilitate Stronger Collaboration between Community Development and Economic Development Initiatives

Working ties between community development and economic development agencies and practitioners in the Birmingham area need strengthening at the municipal, county, and state levels. Community development is the process of improving the quality of life in a community, generally fostered by the leadership of actors in the public and non-profit sectors. Economic development focuses around the creation of wealth and jobs in a region, often driven by the interests and needs of various businesses. Both practices perform important roles, but tend to

have blind spots, making integrated and empathetic collaboration between two immensely valuable. When community development and economic development professionals work together collaboratively, they can ensure that the actions they are taking to grow the local economy and improve quality of life do not have negative unintended consequences or undermine each other's goals. When viewed as a non-zero sum activity, this collaboration can allow the parties to leverage the numerous resources, skills, and competencies at their disposal across business, government, and community groups to positively impact the goals either party, and to find approaches that synergistically align and reinforce their respective strategies and desired outcomes.

Best Practices

CHARLOTTE PROMOTES NEIGHBORHOODS

Charlotte's Neighborhood Matching Grants Program has been helping local citizens improve their neighborhoods since 1993. The program awards funds of up to \$25,000 to eligible neighborhood-based organizations for projects that make neighborhoods better places to live, work, play and shop. The program helps to strengthen neighborhood organizations, while encouraging increased neighborhood participation and partnerships with the city and others. Organizations are required to match the funds requested. The match must be directly related to the proposed project, and may be in the form of cash, volunteer labor, or in-kind donations (equipment, supplies, professional services, etc.) Neighborhoods in targeted areas with median household income of less than \$57,489 are eligible.

THE MISSOURI EXAMPLE:

The Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED) has several neighborhood-centered programs. DED works with local municipalities by overseeing their NID program, along with several tax credit initiatives. Missouri's Neighborhood Preservation Act provides an incentive for the rehabilitation or construction of owner-occupied homes in areas of the state designated as "distressed communities" and with median household incomes at or below 70% of AMI. The credits range from 15 to 35 percent of eligible rehabilitation or construction cost, and can be applied to income, corporate, or various other tax liabilities.

Under the DED, the State of Missouri also offers the Rebuilding Communities Business Incentive, intended to stimulate business activity in targeted neighborhoods. The tax credit incentive applies to businesses that locate, relocate or expand their business in “distressed communities”. The businesses are eligible for 25 to 40 percent tax relief on relocation costs, new equipment, maintenance, wiring, or software development, as well as 1.5% of the gross salary of each employee at the location.

Theme

Covenants Local ordinances, practices or legislation that incentivize or deter certain behaviors related to this improvement of Birmingham neighborhoods.

Opportunity Statement:

Housing needs and policy priorities differ across communities and change quickly due to shifting market conditions and political environments. Accordingly, housing strategies and policies should be tailored to many differing contexts. The City of Birmingham should develop a tool box of model policies practiced at both local and state levels that promote and ensure the improvement of housing conditions in Birmingham’s neighborhoods. Creating encouragement and incentives for stakeholders to affect investment and development in targeted neighborhoods should be central to such policies.

Policy Strategy

The City should work towards the enactment of ordinances and legislation at both the local and state levels that promote and ensure the improvement of housing conditions throughout the city. These policies should reflect specific local contexts, and create conditions that encourage various stakeholders to affect investment and development in targeted neighborhoods.

Place Strategy

Addressing the physical and aesthetic condition of residential properties must be central to any program that targets Birmingham neighborhoods. The problems of vacant, abandoned, and physically distressed properties and insufficient physical infrastructure are at crisis levels in parts

of the City, discouraging investment and the demand for housing, depressing property values harming service provision and devastating neighborhood commerce.

Tactic/Opportunities

Policy Strategy Tactics

- 1) Enhance the Vacant Property Registration System and Database
 - a. The City of Birmingham has generated a registrations system and database that can be enhanced with vacant property registration policies. A registration ordinance requires owners of properties that have become vacant or abandoned for a predetermined length of time to register formally with the City. This policy would provide the City with a point of contact in the event that a property becomes a public annoyance or negatively impacts a neighborhood. It also allows the City to encourage the property owners to create an action plan aligned with the neighborhood's interests. Such a policy can also service as a revenue source for the City as it includes registration fees. These fees increase the longer that a property remains vacant, and are reduced when a property owner makes a good faith effort towards actions that benefit the neighborhood.
 - i. This policy can also include inspection requirements for vacant properties, local representation requirements for out-of-state owners, minimum insurance requirements, and maintenance standards. A frequently updated city-maintained vacant property database, containing ownership and contact information, condition descriptions, and more, would also be a part of this tactic. This tactic could have major positive impact on tipping point neighborhoods. The enforcement aspects of the policy would require careful observation, and a careful review six months after implementation would likely be necessary. After a full year of operation a thorough audit and evaluation should occur, including an analysis of the potential need for additional related legislation.
- 2) Concentrate Housing Dollars and Code Enforcement in Priority Areas
 - a. The City of Birmingham should design and implement a comprehensive code enforcement and program investment strategy based around targeted neighborhoods. With finite and shrinking funding for housing related policies and

investments, many municipalities have shifted away from spreading out their resources towards concentrating them in very specific locations and program areas. It is recommended that the City of Birmingham redirect the bulk of code enforcement resources towards selected improvement areas, while maintaining the ability to respond to enforcement complaints. Such a targeted program investment strategy might include a vacant properties action plan. A targeted comprehensive code enforcement strategy could include the mobilization of local neighborhood residents as Code Enforcement Marshals, responsible for monitoring recording the condition of neighborhood properties, documenting code violations, taking relevant photos, identifying safety hazards, etc. This could be done with mobile devices, allowing for real time updating of a database of property information.

3) Establish a Vacant Property Receivership/Conservatorship Program

- a. Given the severity of property abandonment and blight in Birmingham there has been increased discussion about restrictions on property owners who do not pro-actively address the physical conditions of these properties. Eminent domain towards an end of wholesale disposition has been increasingly discussed as a tool for dealing with non-responsive owners.
- b. The Vacant Property Receivership is one tool that has been effectively used in states like Maryland, Pennsylvania, Indiana and New Jersey. Receivership gives a municipality the authority to temporarily seize the rights of a property's owner under a court-appointed directive. The owner is required to complete specific duties and reimburse costs incurred during receivership, and only after these completions and reimbursements can the owner regain his or her rights to the property.

4) Promote a Neighborhood Agenda at the State Legislature

- a. There are many good examples of local governments working collaboratively with their respective states to advance policies or programs for the purpose of targeting specific urban neighborhoods for investment and development. It is recommended that the City of Birmingham collaborate with legislative

delegations at all levels to introduce measures that support these goals. The following are three strong examples of such efforts:

- i. Extradition of Out-of-State Owners
- b. In order for someone to be prosecuted for code violations, that individual must be present in the state where the crime was committed, or he or she must be extradited. There has been significant confusion regarding municipalities' rights to seek the extradition of property owners not present in the state. Pennsylvania's Neighborhood Blight Reclamation and Revitalization Act clarify municipalities' rights to extradite those property owners.
 - i. Permit and License Denial for Owners of Nuisance Property
- c. In Pennsylvania, the Neighborhood Blight Reclamation & Revitalization Act allows municipalities to deny applications for permits and licenses if said application are delinquent on taxes or other municipal charges, or if any property owned by the applicants are in serious violation of code and no substantial action has been taken to remedy this. This is the case even if said properties are in other municipalities.
 - i. Tax Exemption for Improvement of Deteriorating Real Property
- d. A local taxing authority may exempt the assessed valuation of improvements to deteriorated properties in a designated "deteriorated neighborhood" from real property taxes. In a Pennsylvania example, the law's amendments allow for graduated ten-year abatement and permit a taxing body to devise its own schedule for abatement, which must be ten years or less.

Place Strategy Tactics:

For numerous reasons, addressing the condition of vacant and abandoned parcels must be central to any program that targets specific neighborhoods. The problem of vacant and abandoned properties is at a crisis level in certain areas of the city, exacerbating spatial inequity by discouraging investment and demand, and depressing property values in these areas, while other areas thrive and absorb pent-up investment and demand.

Municipal service provision is also harmed because property tax revenues are starved through both lowered assessed values and tax delinquency. These distressed residential

properties also harm nearby businesses, having dissimulating effects on the local neighborhood economy.

1) Promote Purchase-Rehab Lending

With vacant properties, an aging housing stock, and limited government resources all creating a strain on the housing market, the preservation and renovation of existing housing stock should be a citywide priority. Many developers have limited single-family experience at the scale needed to deal with the problem, and there are high risks and costs to investing in properties that may sit idle for a very long time.

Renovation mortgages allow borrowers to secure permanent financing to repair or rehabilitate a site built homes, either as a purchase or a refinance transaction. This usually takes place with one loan and a single closing. These loan products allow new capital or investment to come into an area without taxing the borrowing capacity of local developers as these mortgages replace the interim construction financing that is typically used.

This type of financing can help increase the number of eligible and willing buyers for properties needing repair or renovation. Current renovation loan product offerings are often inadequate for three reasons;

- The contingent liability (recourse) that lenders are required to hold during the period between loan origination and construction completion; 2. Many lenders lack the degree of in-house construction monitoring capacity that large scale rehabilitation requires; and 3. After renovation property values may be difficult to ascertain. The City of Birmingham could leverage its relationship with the lending community to advocate for more renovation mortgage products like those described above.

2) Implement the Use of a Smart Rehab Code

The City of Birmingham could enhance interest in the renovation of vacant homes by adopting a “Smart building code”. Construction cost has increased over time, and building codes have also changed in ways to attempt to offset those increases. However, they have not been entirely successful, and many potential development projects have never gotten off the ground because of prohibitive increases in construction costs. A smarter, more nimble building code would make it easier and cheaper to renovate vacant and abandoned structures.

A smart rehab code employs three distinct categories: rehabilitation, change of use, and additions. Rehabilitation is further divided into four categories, which relate to the extent of work that is to be undertaken: Repair, Renovation, Alteration, and Reconstruction. Smart rehab codes include provisions for buildings that meet the standards for historic buildings under State and Federal agencies, and provide flexible standards that best fit the extent of the planned rehabilitation.

3) Enhance Neighborhood Gateways

Neighborhood gateways are views from major public right of ways that contribute to the aesthetics and identity of a community. They are often perceived key entrances or “front doors” to a neighborhood, which draw observers in and give them a sense of the area’s character. Debris, disorder, vacancy and neglect along major neighborhood gateways can have undue negative influence on the choices of households, individuals, and investors potentially repelling them. Retail stores and activities are often major components of the appearance of “gateways”, and indicators of perceived neighborhood quality. Vacant storefronts and underutilized buildings in visually prominent locations can exacerbate problems of disinvestment because of the perceptions they engender, as can the presence of industrial sites.

Establishing or improving a neighborhood’s identity through the improvement of target neighborhood “gateways” can help in neighborhood revitalization. An improved physical appearance leads to an improved perception of safety, and to visitors and investors who are more likely to show interest in a community. Neighborhood assets displayed prominently, such as preserved historic structures, signage, public art, and community gardens, can help to improve a neighborhood’s perception and have a positive impact on its economic fortunes.

Best Practices

THE OAKLAND EXAMPLE

In 2010, the Oakland, California City Council implemented a program that requires banks to register homes in a Blight Database after property owners are notified that they are in default. After homes are registered in this database, banks must visit properties on a monthly

basis and conduct visual inspections to determine their occupancy status. As homes remain vacant, banks pay the city a \$568 annual registration fee, and must hire a local property manager, securing the premises and performing property maintenance. Banks are charged every day for each property that does not comply with these standards. Revenue generated from this policy is invested into local foreclosures prevention organizations. In Oakland, this program has generated 1.6 million dollars in revenue since its inception.

TARGETED DEPLOYMENT BEST PRACTICES:

Baltimore, Maryland has an initiative called Targeted Enforcement Toward Visible Outcomes (TEVO). TEVO focuses the Baltimore Housing Departments code enforcement resources towards 6,000 substandard, vacant, and boarded-up properties within transitional neighborhoods that have market potential, much like Atlanta's TAOs. Through TEVO, the city aggressively pursues the owners of these properties through an assortment of enforcement actions.

The Dallas Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) is a public investment program that focuses on distressed areas, especially those with many vacant lots, aging homes, and large numbers of code issues. Dallas is concentrating 60% to 80% of affordable housing funds and Community Development Block Grant Public Improvement funds in these selected areas. The NIP emphasizes leveraging private development, facilitating sustainable neighborhood redevelopment through stakeholder/community partnerships, and targeting city resources and initiatives.

THE PENNSYLVANIA EXAMPLE:

In Pennsylvania, the Blighted and Abandon Property Conservatorship Law (68 P.S. 1101, Act 135 of 2008) allows a municipality, non-profit organization, development authority, neighbor or business owner to initiate a court action, which appoints a third party "conservator" to improve a property when the owner refuses or is absent. This law has seen widespread and highly successful application in the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

After giving due process notice to the property's owner and any lien holders, a conservator may be appointed. The conservator is given the right to take possession of the building to bring it up

to code and carry out a rehabilitation plan approved by the court, or if rehabilitation is not feasible, to demolish the property.

If financing is necessary to carry out the court –approved conservator’s plan, the court can approve a new first mortgage with priority over any other liens against the property, except governmental liens. The owner may then only regain possession after reimbursing the conservator for costs. If the owner does not redeem the property from conservatorship, the court may approve the sale of the property free and clear of any debt.

PHILADELPHIA AND NEW JERSEY’S SMART CODE SUCCESS

In order to encourage neighborhood rehabilitation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania uses and Existing Structures Code (35 P.S. 7210,101 et seq.). Since 2003, the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) has been part of Pennsylvania’s Uniform Construction Code (UCC). The IEBC recognizes the difference between new construction and work on existing buildings., and is designed to facilitate the rehabilitation of existing structures in a safe and economical manner. This eliminates the application of construction codes to building rehabilitation projects.

CHICAGO’S GATEWAY PROGRAM

Chicago Gateway Green, founded in 1986, is a non-profit organization dedicated to greening and beautifying Chicago’s expressways, gateways and neighborhoods, based on the idea that beauty and sustainability go hand in hand. Since its founding, Chicago Gateway Green and its partners have worked to better the environment and the quality of life of Chicagoland residents and visitors by improving the gateways that lead into public spaces and communities. Chicago Gateway Green is a 501 (c) 3 non- profit which improves Chicago neighborhood.

Theme

The City should work towards the attraction or retention of various groups in targeted neighborhoods in the hope of bringing commitment and resources to those areas. This can be done through the development of initiatives focused on making these neighborhoods places where existing residents want to stay and new residents want to live.

Opportunity Statement

Investment in a neighborhood is not limited to the actions of private individuals and firms. The concept of “Community Investment” describes how public and private entities coordinate and target their resources to improve or enhance a community as a whole. Given a community’s strengths, private resources are often sufficient to maintain a neighborhood’s quality and build upon those strengths. However, as a neighborhood moves down the continuum, the right mix of public and private investment becomes critical. With limited resources, the public sector must be strategic in where it chooses to target its resources and capital.

Housing issues transcend organizational, industrial and governmental boundaries. Working cross-sectorial partnerships between public, private and non-profit groups must be established towards an overarching goal of generating positive change in targeted neighborhoods. These partnerships should be part of coherent long-term housing strategies that reflect a shared vision for housing and community development in the City of Birmingham, building connections between the organizations and agencies in areas of housing and community development, economic, finance and banking and more. Without proper coordination and consensus building, different entities often make decisions that conflict with or offset one another, not supporting any larger goal or strategy for the city. This lack of coordination reduces many potential positive impacts, even when each party is making decisions that seem efficacious when viewed on their own.

Establish a Targeted Workforce or Employer

Employer Assisted Housing (EAH) is a cost-effective initiative that can simultaneously help employers and neighborhoods. Through EAH programs, targeted employers promote affordable housing solutions for their workers. By helping employees find housing close to work or transit, employers reduce lengthy commutes that contribute to employee stress and fatigue, traffic congestion and air pollution. They also help to reduce employees housing and transportation costs, the largest two expenses for working families which combine to make up close to 57% of household income. The benefits of these programs typically include homebuyer assistance, purchase incentives, rental assistance, education and counseling. EAH programs make a great addition to local economic development plans for all of the reasons listed above.

The City of Birmingham should champion an EAH program that helps workers gain access to housing in new developments and vacant properties located in target neighborhoods near major employment centers. Increasing the population of responsible, involved homeowners and renters in these communities can help to make them more vibrant and engaged, and allow them to more easily support and attract local businesses. EAH programs can also help improve residents' work-life balance, help employers to attract and retain quality employees, and increase employee productivity and morale. These impacts would all help to make the City more attractive as a place to live and do business.

Create a Collaborative Culture between Non-profit and For Profit Developers

There is great opportunity in Birmingham for both visionary non-profit and for-profit developers, and their activities are essential to the creation of successful neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the two sectors ignore each other far more often than they collaborate. Non-profit and for-profit developers each have their own strengths and weaknesses. For-profit developers typically have specific technical expertise, better ability to cover land acquisition and up-front development costs, and are able to move through the development process more quickly and efficiently. Non-profit developers tend to be more familiar with specific neighborhoods, their local market, and the institutions in and around them. They also tend to have valuable relationships with individuals and organizations in these neighborhoods.

The City should promote collaboration and joint work on future projects between for-profit and non-profit developers, in which both sector's strengths can be best utilized in tandem. More broadly, the City should work towards the creation of a general environment of collaboration, mutual respect and trust between the two groups.

Collaboration with Public and Private Utility Providers

Utility companies are rarely involved in attempts to track vacant properties and neighborhood changes. However, they possess detailed information that allows them to understand vacancy trends better than almost anyone, as they monitor the usage of their services at specific addresses. In 2003, Southern Company made a major investment in GIS enhancements that allowed the sharing of data across 153 of Georgia's 159 Counties. Alabama Power also uses GIS to assist the state and local Development Authorities with Economics Development site

selection. The City of Birmingham Watershed Department has made significant investments in tracking systems, such as on-line tools that track and report work performed by their field crews.

The City should establish a neighborhood vacancy tracking initiative with Alabama Power and The Watershed Department that will allow for the sharing of information on utility uses. Cross referencing data from these two utilities could serve as additional confirmation to visual field assessments as to the occupancy status of a property. Additionally, data collection on the utility use patterns of residential properties would allow the City to stay ahead of vacancy and abandonment problems. This augmentation of the “windshield” survey field data would also allow the City to have better information on vacancies inside specific units of multi-family apartments and condominiums, as well as single-family homes. Utility companies could also enlist their field workers to report on the visual conditions of specific properties as they perform their day-to-day duties.

Best Practices

UNIVERSITY CASE STUDY – JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Since 1997, Baltimore, Maryland’s Johns Hopkins University has operated an EAH program in partnership with the City of Baltimore. Johns Hopkins provides eligible employees with a 1,000 dollar grant to purchase a home within a designated area, which is then matched by a 1,000 dollar grant from the city. If an employee chooses to buy a home in the target area – one of the neighborhoods close to the university’s main campus – he or she receives a 500-dollar bonus grant from the University. To date, more than 350 University employees have taken advantage of the program. John Hopkins also has initiated conversations with other local institutions, such as the University of Baltimore and the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), about the possibility of creating a joint homebuyer assistance program and a shared-appreciation mortgage product for EAH program participants.

Appendix K: Youth and Recreation

Video Link by TeAndria Ellis

<https://splice.gopro.com/v?id=VbezR4>