Northwest Detroit
Neighborhood Revitalization Vision and Strategic Framework
Sinai-Grace Guild Community Development Corporation

Winship  College Park  Cray/St. Mary's  Harmony Village  Hubbell-Puritan  Belmont  Bethune  Schulze
Sinai-Grace Guild Community Development Corporation (SGGCDC)
email: info@sinaigraceguildcdc.org
https://www.facebook.com/SGGCDC

In collaboration with SGGCDC, Centric Design Studio facilitated the Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Framework Process, and co-authored the SGGCDC Neighborhood Strategic Framework Report.
email: info@centricdesignstudio.com

*The cover image is of “Life Trees” by artists Erik Nordin and Israel Nordin of the Detroit Design Center. This beautiful sculpture is located in the lobby of DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital for all to enjoy.*

*Image located at: DMC YouTube Page: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIFuM4nX-eX5pvCO6ixkcA
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Neighborhood Framework Process

Acknowledgements

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Sinai-Grace Guild Community Development Corporation Executive Board and Staff

Introduction

Neighborhood Context

Community Institutions

Historic Places

Neighborhoods

Community Engagement and Visioning Process
We would like to express our gratitude to the following individuals for their guidance and participation in the process to develop this neighborhood framework:

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Linda Edwards
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Hazel Fludd
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Ed Gardner
Alan Gibbs
Tom Goddeeris
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Dan Herman
Samirin Hill
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Don Johnson
Cynthia Jones
Norma Kelley
Lynn Kelley
Angela Kemp
Cecily King
Ralph King
Mr. Kyriacou
Maria LaLonde
Ralph Leaphart
Stephen Lentini
Patricia Little
Mary Little
Joi Little
Sandra Little
Ronald Lockett
Breanna Lod
Christianne Malone
Angela Martin
Cora Martin
Councilman Roy McCalister
Jerry McCullough
Mary McGhee
Ethel MCtaw
Yodzi Mesfin-Johnson
Dorothy Menefee
Dean Middlebrusk
Garnett Mimms
Kylee Mitchell
Adrian Monge
Veronica Moon
Karen Moore
Emily Moorhead
Sam Newsome
Wendy Nix
Peggy Noble
Nancy Norwood
Joshua Orange
Joyce Penn
Patricia Pernell-Shelton
Sandra Pickens
Damon Pitt
Nicolette Pitts
Martha Potere
Virginia Price
Angela Prince
Yelena Ramautar
Alicia Reed
Millicort Rencher
Amy Rencher
Clark Rice
Elaine Riley
Lori Roberts
D. Shawn Rogers
Dr. Melvin Rubenfire
Michelle Ruffin
Shirley Ruffin
Shanita Rutland
Melissa Scott
Kenneth Scott
Norene Shackelford
Olivia Shakoor
Vernetta Sheppard
Marsha Silver
Alexis Smith
Jennifer Smith
Barbara Smith
Clayton Smith
Revisian Smith
William Smith
Kim Tandy
Counilman James Tate
Mary Taturn
Audrey Thomas
Charles Thomas
Damon Thomas
Charles Thomas
Louise Tingle
Paula Trilety
Felicia Turner
Betty Varner
Jeff Wafer
Dave Walker
Ellee Ward
Mary Waters
E. Watkins
Stephanie Watson
Cubie Watson
Susan Watts
Valerie Weatherly
Gwendolyn Weathersby
Bill Welborne
JoAnne White
Vivian White
Angela Whitside
Dion Williams
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Blackstone Community Council
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Mayor’s Office, Department of Neighborhoods
Planning and Development Department
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SGGCDC Executive Board and Staff

Board of Directors
Dr. Abby Freeman, President
Anita Sevier, Vice-President
Dr. Larry Mathews, Treasurer
June Mack, Secretary
Pastor Mary Austin
Juanita Dickerson, President Emeritus
Paulette Griffin
Ryan Charles Mack
Conrad Mallett, Jr.
Katrina McCree
Palencia Mobley
Crystal Perkins

Eleanore Eveleth, Executive Director
Audra Carson, Community Engagement Coordinator
Stephanie Harbin, LISC AmeriCorps Volunteer / Safety and Walkability Specialist
Ekanem Obong, LISC AmeriCorps Volunteer / Community Engagement Associate

SGGCDC History, Mission and Vision

SGGCDC History
Under the leadership of Juanita Dickerson, the Grace Guild of Sinai-Grace Hospital served patients and residents for more than 40 years, working to improve access to health care in Northwest Detroit. Through collaborative conversations with a broad range of community stakeholders, in 2016 the Guild changed its name and focus. Initiated by the DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital, the Sinai-Grace Guild Community Development Corporation (SGGCDC) is a nonprofit community development corporation serving neighborhoods around the hospital. Our initial primary focus area includes the Winship, College Park, Crary / St. Mary’s, Hubbell-Puritan, Belmont, Bethune, Harmony Village, and Schulze neighborhoods. In June 2017, SGGCDC began a process to engage community stakeholders to better understand their vision for the neighborhoods and to set the intention and direction of the work of SGGCDC. We have now completed the first phase of the community conversations and continue to work with community partners to implement this vision and strategic framework.

SGGCDC Mission
Driven by our community residents, businesses, and leaders, Sinai-Grace Guild Community Development Corporation is committed to holistic and equitable revitalization toward a thriving, healthy, and sustainable Northwest Detroit.

SGGCDC Vision
Sinai-Grace Guild Community Development Corporation serves Northwest Detroit neighborhoods with integrity and respect. We work to strengthen the neighborhood connection between residents, businesses, and institutions. We work together as stewards of our beautiful, walkable, vibrant, and hopeful neighborhoods. Residents are deeply valued and have genuine opportunities for healthy, financially secure, and rich lives.
In September 2017, SGGCDC launched the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Framework (NRSF) process. The purpose of the NRSF process was to bring together local institutions, residents and faith-based organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders to uplift our neighborhood assets and illustrate the community vision for the future. This has been an intentional process that has created a direction for SGGCDC’s work and has highlighted opportunities for partnerships to strengthen the neighborhoods we serve.

We held four community design workshops as part of our NRSF process. The structure of these workshops helped SGGCDC to understand the stakeholder-identified assets, opportunities, and project proposals. The workshops included leaders and residents from SGGCDC’s initial focus area – including the Winship, College Park, Crary/St. Mary’s, Belmont, Bethune, Harmony Village, and Schulze neighborhoods. Between 85-105 residents attended each meeting. In addition to the workshops, we held more than 25 one-on-one and small group conversations with area residents and leaders. We have also participated in about two-dozen community gatherings to solicit input, and have conducted a survey electronically, on paper, and via phone.

In addition, community stakeholders formed a Steering Committee (SC) to guide the framework process. The SC was open to all, but most members were representatives of organizations. It was made up of about 25 area leaders, nonprofit partners, City of Detroit departments, and city-wide technical assistance providers. Moving forward, the SC will continue to meet, share information across organizations, and build a structure for decision-making.

Our outreach for this process was limited, but it was a good beginning. We hope now to continue to build relationships and have conversations with more institutions, residents, and business owners. We also hope to engage younger residents in a meaningful way, as youth and educational experts were not well-represented in this process to date.

During the NRSF process, community stakeholders identified community assets, opportunities for revitalization and growth, and ideas for implementation strategies and projects. The strategies fell broadly into seven categories, detailed more within this document:

**The seven Strategic Focus Areas:**
- Commercial and Economic Development
- Economic Security and Wealth-Building
- Residential Stabilization and Growth
- Open Space and Parks
- Mobility and Sustainability
- Community-Building and Enhanced Quality of Life
- Leadership and Neighborhood Capacity Development

SGGCDC hopes to utilize this framework to build partnerships and implement projects. We will continue to develop strategies, project ideas, and implementation designs together with the Steering Committee and through deliberative community conversations.

SGGCDC is driven by a strong philosophy to support resident-driven decisions and equitable revitalization. SGGCDC prioritizes community engagement to accomplish this. We want the organization and our projects to be reflective of the community’s vision and hopes. To that end, this framework is just the beginning of the conversations. It is a living document that will be modified as we continue to listen and understand better the vision and hopes of community stakeholders.
SGGCDC Initial Focus Area: Seven Mile (N) to Fenkell (S), Southfield Freeway (W) to Lodge Freeway (E) within the context of the City of Detroit
### People

- **36,000** Residents
- 96% Black / African American
- 25% under 18 years old
- 30% over 55 years old
- 63% have HS diploma or more
- 19% have at least one disability

### Housing

- **16,700** Housing Units
- 57% Home Owner
- 43% Renter Occupied
- Housing Vacancy Rate: 25%
- 31% of Occupied Housing Lacks Adequate Kitchen or Plumbing
- More than 85% of housing is single family, 12% multifamily
- About **2,600** residential property owners facing foreclosure

### Economy

- Unemployment rate **21%**
- 36% of Residents in Poverty
- 75% of renters are housing cost burdened
- 97% of home owners have affordable housing

(assuming that affordable is paying no more than 30% of income at 80% of AMI)

Community Institution Map

Initial Focus Area: Seven Mile (N) to Fenkell (S), Southfield Freeway (W) to Lodge Freeway (E)
Organizational Service Area: Eight Mile (N) to Fenkell (S), Southfield Freeway (W) to Wyoming (E)
The Greenfield Peace congregation was founded in 1887. This 1941 building is in the Early English Gothic style. Note its narrow lancet windows. The architect was Merritt and Cole.

The total campus includes:
- The sanctuary with seating 190, office and classroom total approx. 3,400 square feet
- The church bought the four bedroom house directly to the east of the church that serves as church offices.

Renaissance is one of four magnet high schools in the Detroit Public Schools Community District; (the others being Cass Technical High School, Detroit School of Arts, and Communication & Media Arts High School).

Renaissance founded in 1978 on the former site of Catholic Central High School, Renaissance’s first senior class graduated in 1981. A new building for the school was dedicated in 2005 at the site of the former Sinai Hospital. In 2005, the school moved into a $200+ million campus complete with a language and computer labs, and a football field. Features include solar collectors, a rainwater harvesting system, and innovative cooling systems. The school moved from the building that is now F.L.I.C.S., or Foreign Language Immersion Cultural Studies.

Westminster Church has a long history of mission in the surrounding community. Westminster calls itself “a church for all people,” and the congregation is a mixture of African-American, White and African members. In it’s current location for more than fifty years, the church has witnessed a changing neighborhood. Now, some members live in the neighborhood, and others commute to church.
Lewis College of Business

Lewis College of Business was an institution of higher education in Detroit, Michigan in the United States. It was also the first historically black college in Michigan. Founded in 1928, it specialized in business-related topics.

In 1941, Dr. Lewis moved her college into the James Murphy home at John R. and East Ferry. Originally, the focus was upon training black women for secretarial jobs, but after the Civil Rights decade, the college expanded programs and offerings, and began granting an Associate's degree. In 1978, the Indianapolis and Detroit Lewis Colleges of Business were merged. In 1976 Lewis Business College moved for the last time to the recently vacated Detroit Bible Institute on Meyers Road on the northwest side of the city.

The Detroit Bible Institute had been founded in 1945, and built a modern campus on Meyers in 1950. Two additional halls were built in 1958 and 1963, before the institute moved to the suburbs, and sold the campus to Lewis.

Former Office of Charles N. Agree

Architect Charles N. Agree began his practice in Detroit in 1917 he built some great buildings like Whittier Apartments, new modern-style malls such as the Oakland Mall, Tel-12 Mall, Meadowbrook Mall and the former Pontiac Mall.

As the Agree firm began to do more shopping malls, they moved into this self-designed new office from The Book Tower.

Charles was also on the Construction board for Sinai hospital, just around the corner. Agree lived in the Boston-Edison neighborhood and was a noted philanthropist in the Detroit area all of his life, until his passing in 1982.

Mercury Theater

The Mercury Theater was the first theater outside downtown Detroit to show 70mm, with “Porgy and Bess” in 1959. It was also one of the first non-downtown houses to screen first-run films.

In 1985, the large auditorium was twinned into a set of 600-seat auditoriums. The theater’s original Streamline Modern decor was left relatively intact,
WINSHIP COMMUNITY

The Winship Community offers a congenial, working-class neighborhood with affordable traditional style brick single family homes ranging in styles from colonial, bungalows, ranches and duplexes. The community has affordable quality senior living apartments and a highly rated nursing rehabilitation facility on West Outer Drive. The community is home to highly acclaimed public schools, Renaissance high School and Foreign Language Immersion and Cultural Studies School, and Phillip Randolph Technical High School on Hubbel Street.

COLLEGE PARK

College Park has a strong network of neighborhood organizations. The College Park Community Association's purpose is to promote a clean and safe environment for neighbors, youth, and seniors. College Park has a diverse housing stock, with tree-lined streets. The neighborhood has quaint ranches, lovely bungalows, and stately colonials. The neighborhood includes Fellowship Chapel, First Baptist Institutional Church, and the People's Community Church, as well as Old Redford, Renaissance HS, and Winans Academy.

CRARY / ST. MARY'S

Crary / St. Mary's neighborhood was built out in the 1930s and '40s with thousands of tidy brick-fronted houses, homes that look like smaller versions of those found in nearby Grandmont Rosedale. Commercial activity lines the main corridors of Grand River and Greenfield as in so many Detroit neighborhoods. Located within the Crary/St Marys neighborhood of Northwest Detroit, this home enjoys proximity to local amenities, such as: Retail and dining options along Grand River, Puritan, and McNichols, Cook, Kelly and Fields Playgrounds, Easy access to the Southfield Freeway. Neighborhood boundaries are West Greenfield to Southfield, and McNichols to Grand River.

HARMONY VILLAGE

Harmony Village was originally annexed, subdivided, and development began in the 1920s. By 1940, the Harmony Village neighborhood was fully developed. During the 1960s the John C. Lodge freeway was built right through the center of the Harmony Village neighborhood. During the 1970s, government projects, including an open-air market and housing revitalization efforts, were attempted to address economic problems and an aging housing stock. Harmony Village neighborhood strengths are its proximity to Clinton Elementary School, the Lodge Freeway, and numerous faith-based institutions within the study area.
The Schulze neighborhood has more than 9,800 residents in a one square mile radius. Bungalows and colonials dot the landscape. The Northwest Activities Center is a major anchor of the neighborhood, offering activities, services, and programs to more than 300,000 visitors annually. The area is welcoming its first new development in years, new senior housing built by longtime community partner, Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, one of the largest congregations in Detroit.

SCHULZE

Located on the northwest side of Detroit, Belmont is a community of friendly neighbors that love to maintain their homes. This neighborhood has active block clubs that meet on a monthly basis. It is surrounded by churches and is not far from fun, free, family activities at the Northwest Activities Center. Located on the northwest side of Detroit with Puritan to the north, Greenfield Road to west, Fenkell to the south and Strathmoor to the east. Belmont is nestled in the middle of the Southfield, John C. Lodge and I-96 freeways and is only 15 minutes from downtown Detroit.

BELMONT

The Hubbell-Puritan Community is very diverse; it has more ethnically African and Sub-Saharan African people than nearly any neighborhood in America. 22.8% of the neighborhood’s residents have African ancestry and 22.8% have Sub-Saharan African ancestry. The neighborhood’s housing stock includes affordably-sized brick bungalows and the area has tree-lined streets. The area is home to Coleman A. Young Elementary School, which is actively involved in neighborhood improvement efforts.

HUBBELL-PURITAN

Homes in the Bethune Community neighborhood of northwest Detroit are well-situated near local amenities such as: Adams-Butzel Park and Sawyer Playground, Adams-Butzel Recreation Complex, retail and dining options along Meyers and Schaefer Hwy., and Loyola High School. They also enjoy easy access to the John C. Lodge Freeway.

BETHUNE COMMUNITY

Mumford High School
Highlighted Topics:

- Asset Retention
- Strong Commercial Corridors
- Sustainability
- Storm Water Management
- Connected Neighborhoods
- Neighborhood Marketing
- Walkability
- Support for Neighborhood Block Clubs
- Activated Parks
- Art in the Neighborhoods
- Resources for Older Adults
- Connections between School/Community/institutions
- Vacant Property Maintenance
- Adaptive Reuse Opportunities
- Safety Awareness
- Attraction to Young Families
- Equitable Development
- Preservation of Historical Assets
- Establishment of Neighborhood Business District Guidelines and Pledge

SGGCDC initial focus neighborhood area
SGGCDC invited residents in the neighboring communities to discuss, plan and establish the foundation for the community revitalization framework.

<table>
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<td><strong>Thursday, September 28, 2017</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday, October 24, 2017</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wednesday, November 29, 2017</strong></td>
<td><strong>Saturday, February 10, 2018</strong></td>
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<td>The purpose of this workshop was to introduce the SGGCDC’s mission and discuss ideas about rebuilding each neighborhood; learn about neighborhood reconnectivity to parks and open spaces, housing and commercial opportunities. Discuss how planning can benefit the residents and stakeholders in the district.</td>
<td>The purpose of this workshop was to focus on key characteristics of each area, identify assets and opportunities for improvements in each neighborhood. Discuss reinvestment plans and neighborhood connectivity, open spaces, housing and business revitalization.</td>
<td>The purpose of this workshop was to focus on key characteristics of each area, identify assets and opportunities for improvements in each neighborhood. Discuss scenarios for future development and determine evaluation criteria to assess them.</td>
<td>The purpose of this workshop was to further develop the framework plan and introduce action plans concept with short-term and long-term goals. Discuss prioritization of over 100 stakeholder-generated ideas and identify implementation partners.</td>
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**Vision**

1. Westminster Church of Detroit
2. WCCC Northwest Campus
3. Northwest Activities Center
4. First Baptist Institutional Church

**Community Assets**

1. Designing Our Neighborhoods' Future
2. Designing Our Neighborhoods' Future
3. Designing Our Neighborhoods' Future
4. Designing Our Neighborhoods' Future

**Opportunities**

1. Community Workshop #1
2. Community Workshop #2
3. Community Workshop #3
4. Community Workshop #4

**Solutionary Concepts**
Low occupancy neighborhood, mostly senior population, primarily on fixed income. Community does a good job of maintenance. Block club is very active. No one likes the shopping plaza on corner of Outer Drive and Southfield Freeway.

Top Needs: Commercial property up-keep, lack of business association, lack of youth activities, lack of healthy restaurants.

Top Assets: Arthur Park, First Baptist Church, Comstock Park.

Challenges in finding inclusion in regional development initiatives. Feel abandoned and don’t know how to begin self developments.

Many lots owned by absentee, even foreign landlords who do nothing with property. Residents would like to see housing and tenants restored. Joe Louis Playfield closed down. Would like to create new playground at corner of Wyoming and Pembroke.

8-Mile could be an important commercial corridor and entrance for neighborhoods and connector to suburbs.

Residents stated concerns about medical marijuana distributors.

Adult Education Center is vital to area in which there are about 9,000 dropouts.

There is a fair amount of vacant property in the neighborhood. Some neighbors are buying properties to attract tenants.

Kelley Park provides space for football. It is considered a very important asset.

Top needs: strategies for vacant land, more neighborhood publicity, safety concerns.

Top assets: Adult Education Center, Kelley Park, grocery store (Puritan and Greenfield).
**BELMONT**

Would like to see renters more involved with community and clean-up. Also need a way of holding absentee landlords accountable for renter activity.

Would like better strategies for activating vacant lots. Would like more parks. The number of vacant properties goes up south of McNichols.

Would like better enforcement of city ordinance. Lots of illegal dumping throughout the neighborhood.

Very interested in grant programs, like Neighborhood Opportunity Fund.

**WINSHIP**

Residents are pleased with their housing quality, and generally find that city services come in a timely manner.

Can there be seminars on healthy living and eating? Need more promotion and outlets for healthy food.

Need more variety to restaurants. Too many fast food places, and too few quality sit-down places.

Top Needs: Stray dogs, speeding cars, lack of youth and senior activities, rental properties are not maintained.

Top Assets: Bennet Homes Adult Foster, Randolph Career and Technical Center, The Bowman Community Health Center.

**SCHULZE**

Cleaner, safer, well-lit streets. Need ways to manage landscaping of vacant homes.

Need to develop partnerships with Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, to develop some properties in the surrounding area.

Problems with DTE electric currents. Incidences of appliances exploding.

Need an emergency senior fund, so that seniors on fixed income don’t have to choose between necessities and home repairs.

Need to address safety of routes to schools and vacant properties near Schulze Elementary.
Need indoor activity centers for children. Not enough parks in the area, so kids play in the street.

Not enough businesses that are family-friendly. Need quality restaurants and other family-oriented businesses.

Need places that communities, businesses, and young adults can gather: cafes, community conference spaces. Especially need amenities that attract young people: cafes, bike shops/path.

Use art and bike paths to connect schools and parks. Programs that allow kids to make art in the community.

Would like to see community associations pay into cleaning services for streets.

Need more security at bus stops. More police presence and Project Green Light cameras at nearby businesses would help.

Need more lighting at Outer Drive. New LED lights give out a lot of light, but it doesn’t spread over a large area.

Should have rain gardens in vacant lots and Outer Drive islands to reduce drainage fees.

Loitering near poorly kept commercial property makes residents feel unsafe. Clean up and restore storefronts to beautify and increase safety. Encourage store owners to take care of lots.

Help renters keep up with lawn care and dumpster removal. Make sure these are on time.

Need more neighborhood block club involvement in security: neighborhood watches, Green Light cameras, etc.

Tired of gardens filling in vacant land. People always lose interest in time, and gardens become overgrown. Need new solution.

Would like to see neighborhood beautification strategies, grey water reuse, and recycling services for homes and businesses.

Create a neighborhood tax, like Rosedale, to cover security, yard care, and snow removal.

Board up vacant houses.
BELMONT

- Youth training and engagement could be a mover for sustainability - build pride and physical engagement.
- Would like strategic planting of blue and green infrastructure, especially on Outer Drive. Add a water catchment system to reduce run-off.
- Would like to see grocery stores, pop-ups, “little Eastern Markets,” and facade improvements.
- Use a local facility to repurpose rubber for bike and pedestrian pathways.
- Could Project Greenlight cameras be used in parks?

WINSHIP

- More security. Would like to see joint patrols between police and campus security forces, like in Midtown.
- Would like to see more businesses using Project Green Light cameras.
- Too many speeders on the roads, and stray dogs. Would like to see more presence of animal control.
- Peterson Park needs more community activities: farmers’ market, jazz concerts, movie nights, ice skating, and Youth Day festivals. Need obstacles to keep cars from driving on park grass.
- Alternate bus system to connect this area to Midtown and Downtown.

SCHULZE + NEARBY NEIGHBORHOODS

- Would like a walkable, landscaped community to attract new residents, especially from the hospital.
- Would rather focus on renovating and distributing vacant properties as a sustainable effort.
- Would like luxury goods stores, grocery stores, a furniture store, and Target (or other all-in-one store).
- Want to cut down overgrown trees and plant new ones on Outer Drive medians, from Livernois to Sinai-Grace Hospital.
- Would like a coalition for small businesses to organize resources.
McNichols could be a beautiful, tree-lined street, like Schaefer and Coolidge in Oak Park.

Vacant businesses at McNichols and Schaefer can become something like Cass Collective or Rust Belt Market, or a movie theater, like Cinema Detroit.

Music brings people together. Could use some venues in and around park.

Community groups could get volunteers to be neighborhood lawn mowers; rotate volunteers.

Abandoned duplexes along Curtis could be fixed to improve the perception of neighborhood for potential movers.

Problems with illegal dumping off of Lindsay St. between Thatcher and Santa Maria. Lots of garbage in the field near corner of Santa Maria and Lindsay.

Three car accidents resulting in injury on Prevost, from McNichols to Outer Drive. Residents would like options for slowing traffic here.

Would like more communal connectivity and youth-oriented activities in the neighborhood.

Varrier Park has been renovated and Belle Park is undergoing renovation. Parks should be connected via Forrer Street or Winthrop Street, with a Mo-Go station at Outer Drive.

Apartment buildings on Greenfield and McNichols used to look very nice. Should have work done to restore.

Crime has increased, especially home invasions and car robbery.

Need more senior safety education about people approaching their homes. Thieves will pretend to be salespeople or relatives, and rob the house when the homeowner lets them in.

Would like a police station or neighborhood police detail centrally located within the neighborhood.

Want to attract young families with amenities for children: a new public school and play/activity functions added to the GED center.

Would like a cafe, doughnut shop, ice cream parlor, and quality restaurants for families.
Frequent speeding and drag racing on Greenfield Rd., Schaefer St., and Outer Dr., especially near schools.

Peterson Playfield is important to residents. It also brings visitors into the neighborhood. Park does not feel safe: drug deals, shootings/stabbings. Increase safety and security presence at parks.

Need barriers/landscaping around parks to stop parking on the lawn. Diack park uses boulders, which residents strongly recommend.

Create a bike path along Curtis Ave. to connect Peterson Playfield, Diack Park, and Northwest Activity Center.

Use Crosswalks at Outer Dr. and near schools to slow traffic increasing safety for pedestrians.

Would like nice restaurants and supermarket with healthy and affordable food.

Expand Project Green Light to include panic buttons and security response.

Would like a way to ameliorate vacant houses, make renters and absent landowners accountable to the neighborhood.

Want an employment program giving residents skills and tenure: (Teach carpentry, work on house, sell house for community benefit).

Fund to help with unforeseen expenses, such as emergency home repair, community events, lot clean-up, etc.
Partner with Motor City Restore/Match for grants to restore storefronts along McNichols, and eventually Seven Mile Road.

Partner with large businesses to install Greenlight cameras. Partner with businesses to participate in street clean-ups.

Use lots along commercial corridors that are vacant as micro-parks to expand the pedestrian experience and beautify the area. The lots will become more attractive to buyers.

Use vacant schools as sites for children activity centers. The neighborhoods are in need of indoor activity centers.

Care for property along avenues that children walk to get to and from school.

Group safety education workshops, especially for seniors.

Community can come together to expand on services offered by Ameri-Corps Urban Safety Program: board-up days, safety routes.

Use apps (e.g. Neighborhood.com) to provide a way for residents to stay connected about what is happening in the community.

Use an IP Neighborhood Camera system to deter crime and illegal dumping.

Strengthen relationships between block clubs and police, so that there is a response to what cameras pick up.

Provide resources for first time home buyers: buyer’s counseling, list of housing support groups, first time discount.

Create partnerships between neighborhoods and organizations, and arrange clean-ups and home repair outings.

Brand ‘neighborhood gateways’ by providing signs/art that reflects community values and vision.

Put together groups of volunteers to learn about home weatherization and waterproof homes, especially senior households.

Find partners to apply for a neighborhood wide Motor City Makeover Grant.
### Parks and Open Space
- **Clean up existing sports fields and add new, colorful playground equipment for creative play.**
- **Residents wanted stages in Bale Park and Varrier Park to house concerts and film screenings for various neighborhood events.**
- **Coordinate with vacant storefront owners to use buildings as canvases for murals and art installations.**
- **Artist-led Art-in-the-Street program after school to allow kids to express themselves and learn from the artists.**
- **Art should bring a warm and active atmosphere to the neighborhood. Create ‘entrance art’ that introduce each of the neighborhoods.**

### Sustainability and Mobility
- **Would like to see areas in parks and public spaces to set up farmer’s markets and house special events.**
- **Provide Storm water gardens and swales along Outer Drive that require little to no maintenance. Work with churches to create more swales along the street front.**
- **Create a bike Slow Roll group to activate the area, get exercise and exploration into the neighborhood culture.**
- **Build history into bike stops. Maybe have people posted at stops to give oral histories.**
- **Partner with Greening of Detroit (or similar organizations) to remove trees and shrubs that create tripping hazards and blind spots.**

### Other
- **Residents are pleased with their housing stock, and generally find that city services come in a timely manner.**
- **Need to develop partnerships with the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, to develop some properties in the surrounding area.**
- **Need more variety to restaurants. Too many fast food places, and too few quality sit-down places.**
- **Top Needs: Stray dogs, speeding cars, lack of youth and senior activities, rental properties not maintained.**
- **Top Assets: Bennet Homes Adult Foster, Randolph Career and Technical Center, Thea Bowman Community Health Center.**
Strategic Focus Area One: Commercial and Economic Development

- Retain and expand existing businesses
- Develop entrepreneur pipeline
- Attract new and well-established businesses
- Implement corridor improvement projects
- Collaborative Innovation: Community ownership of commercial space
Northwest Detroit has exceptionally strong housing stock, well-organized and engaged residents, well-regarded schools, and beautiful parks and amenities. Community stakeholders highlighted commercial corridor revitalization and economic development as a key strategic focus to build a thriving, healthy and sustainable community. Under this strategy, SGGCDC and partners will create a supportive environment for neighborhood businesses and work to:

- Retain and expand existing businesses,
- Develop an entrepreneur pipeline connected to a strong support ecosystem,
- Attract new and well-established businesses, and
- Implement corridor improvement projects.

There are more than 36,000 residents in the neighborhoods we serve. In addition, the McNichols corridor is one of Detroit’s primary employment districts. At DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital, there are 2,300 employees and 214,000 patients annually. Three-quarters of survey respondents report only using Seven Mile and McNichols to travel from one area of the city to another – yet these corridors host notable shops, well-run professional businesses, attractive salons, and award-winning restaurants. The area is known for exceptional Soul Food, Coney Islands, and Caribbean restaurants.

**Retain and expand existing businesses**

Community stakeholders identified creative programming and corridor enhancements to uplift the existing businesses and create vibrant commercial areas where existing and new businesses can thrive. Pop-up events, festivals, cash mobs, employee coupons, festivals, and corridor marketing can improve connections between local businesses and the employees and visitors of DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital. Activities to highlight local businesses can help them develop a stronger connection to employees and visitors from the other nearby institutions: Wayne County Community College District—Northwest Campus, Renaissance High School, Foreign Language Immersion and Cultural Studies School, A. Philip Randolph Technical High School, Fellowship Chapel, Westminster Church, First Baptist Institutional Church, Henry Ford Hospital Systems satellite, and Eastern Michigan University satellite campus.

Stakeholders also identified the opportunity to improve the offerings, design, maintenance, and perception of existing businesses. For example, there are several existing grocery stores and markets in the area, but some need improvements to increase resident patronage. Most of our survey respondents rated existing businesses as only fair or poor in the areas of quality of goods and services provided, cleanliness, customer service, and safety (with far fewer reporting excellent or good ratings.) Stakeholders are interested and willing to work with existing businesses to co-design improvements to better serve resident needs.

SGGCDC and our partners can also support business retention and expansion by promoting existing partners, programs, and resources that support business development with technical assistance and resources such as Motor City Match, Motor City Re-Store, NEIdeas, and those listed in the next section.

We will also work with local institutions to build relationships with and utilize the services of local businesses. This strategy was developed by the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation and the New Economy Initiative and piloted in Midtown with Wayne State University, Henry Ford Health System, and Detroit Medical Center in 2010. D2D connects Detroit companies with
quality local suppliers who understand the local market, offer tighter times and quick responses. D2D is building a community of businesses that are supporting each other’s economic success. D2D provides small businesses with essential services and exposure that will allow them to grow and play a larger role in their communities by landing purchase orders from large, Detroit corporations. (Impact report: d2dbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2015-d2d-impact-report.pdf)

**Develop entrepreneur pipeline**

There is a well-developed ecosystem of government, nonprofit, and financial partners in Detroit that support businesses from conception, training, and financing to development, marketing, and expansion. We will connect those resources with Northwest Detroit businesses and entrepreneurs.

**Detroit’s Business Support Ecosystem**

**DEGC:** Operates multiple economic development programs that include lending, TA, and a green grocer program. Programs include: Motor City Match, Motor City Re-Store.

**TechTown:** Incubator and accelerator, with programs for tech and neighborhood small businesses. Works with businesses at all stages, helping startup, emerging and established companies develop, launch and grow.

**BUILD Institute:** Build offers multiple business planning courses that cover various topics according to business stage.

**ProsperUs Detroit:** Offers micro-loans to Detroit startups new to the lending process and combines loans with lifelong technical assistance.

**C2BE:** Provides legal, business, educational services. Launching co-op shared equity loan fund.

**MI-SBDC:** Provides counseling, training and research for new ventures, existing small businesses and advanced technology companies.

**Detroit SCORE:** Entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small businesses.

**Eastern Market:** Technical support for Detroit Kitchen Connect participants, includes business advising, product development, working space, and links to distribution opportunities.

**Fair Food Network:** Guides food enterprises with consulting and connections to industry experts.

**FoodLab Detroit:** For early stage and growing food enterprises. Provides networking, TA, and business development opportunities.

**Potential lenders:** BUILD Institute, CEED Lending, Capital Impact, Detroit Community Loan Fund, Detroit Development Fund, DEGC, Invest Detroit Ventures, Michigan Good Food Fund, Michigan Women’s Foundation, Northern Initiatives, Opportunity Fund, ProsperUs Detroit.

Source: Michigan Good Food Fund and BUILD Institute.
Within the initial SGGCDC focus area, there are several commercial corridors - McNichols and Seven Mile have the greatest number of storefronts in good /fair condition and occupancy rates of 75% and 70% respectively. Throughout the focus area, there are fewer than 20 commercial structures in poor condition or in need of demolition. McNichols and Seven Mile have great potential for housing future neighborhood businesses. Clusters of businesses on other corridors also offer opportunities for smaller nodes to support resident needs and build neighborhood assets.

Community stakeholders identified three key opportunities for entrepreneurs and new businesses:

• Create an entrepreneur hub at the old Federal’s department store. This could be a lively retail and restaurant market space to showcase neighborhood-serving entrepreneurs and to co-locate business support services. The synergy of small businesses in a well-designed market can offer customers an excellent experience and provide businesses with greater opportunities for growth.

• “White-box” the vacant, yet good condition, single story storefronts on McNichols and offer to small, locally-owned businesses. (“White box” means that the developer or CDC would prepare the building systems and space for a new business to design and occupy without the hassle of a full rehab project.)

• Convert vacant institutional buildings into spaces for new businesses or other adaptive reuses.
Adaptive reuse: the process of utilizing a building for a purpose that it was not originally built for. Buildings once used for industrial or institutional purposes can have a second life. Some options include:

- Multi-family residential development,
- Housing for older adults,
- Office building or Co-working spaces,
- Higher learning satellite campus,
- Mixed-use development

St. Vincent’s in Corktown Detroit, MI: an abandoned middle school now shows signs of life, from interior and exterior clean up to opening its newly renovated first and second floor. The school, closed in 2002, and was purchased by a Detroit-based development company who started a lengthy renovation transforming it into a well-designed office space for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
**Attract new and well-established businesses**

In addition to supporting new businesses, we want to attract well-established businesses that can serve as anchors in the commercial corridors. Community stakeholders identified dozens of businesses that they would like to see in the neighborhood. These conversations included documentation of the types of businesses historically lining the commercial corridors. The discussions sparked both nostalgia and a hope to see similar neighborhood-serving businesses in the future. Attracting new businesses would require a stronger foundation, such as a business associations, beautification efforts, and greater corridor walkability, as well as a better understanding of market needs and community desires.

**Business ideas generated by community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurants</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Commercial Amenities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family style restaurants (Variety)</td>
<td>Small Farmers market</td>
<td>Reading Rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Cream Shop</td>
<td>Luxury goods</td>
<td>Bookstores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit and Vegetable Market</td>
<td>Variety Food Market’s</td>
<td>Day care (Children/Pet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit and Vegetable trucks</td>
<td>Home Improvement Store</td>
<td>Fitness Center Spa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candy/Nut/Tea Shop</td>
<td>Vibrant Fresh Food Stores</td>
<td>Lounge - Poetry/Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panera Bread</td>
<td>Flower/Gardening Shop</td>
<td>Game Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deli</td>
<td>Clothing Stores - Boutique</td>
<td>After School Tutoring Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bistro/Cafe</td>
<td>Plant Nursery/Gardening</td>
<td>Painting with a Twist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee shops</td>
<td>Family Laundry Mat</td>
<td>Co-working Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bakery</td>
<td>Locally Made Goods Markets</td>
<td>Amenities to attract young adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Restaurants</td>
<td>Yogurt Shop</td>
<td>Art Gallery</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Commercial Corridor Map: A portion of the neighborhood’s commercial corridor at the intersection of John C. Lodge and McNichols. The map highlights areas where revitalization of the storefronts along the corridor can be reinvisioned to attract potential tenants and residents that can pave way for vibrant walkable streetscapes.
Before: Existing storefront looking at the McNichols facade

After: Storefront makeover with updated exterior finishes and landscaping
Before: Existing storefront looking at the Schaefer facade

After: Storefront makeover with updated exterior finishes and landscaping

**Programs for building improvements**

Providing before and after renderings of the “re-visioned” neighborhood commercial storefronts, allows current and potential building owners to visualize their businesses’ potential street appeal and how it can become an asset to the neighborhood.

**Motor City Match:** The goal is to help start new, permanent businesses in Detroit’s commercial corridors by providing assistance throughout the business start-up and building renovation process.

Motor City Match tackles the city’s startup challenges by matching the best businesses from Detroit and around the world with Detroit’s best available real estate while providing competitive grants, loans and counseling to help both building and business owners get open.

**Motor City Re-Store:** The program gives building owners the opportunity to contribute to the vibrancy of their commercial corridor for all to enjoy.

- Connect building owners with architecture experts to get free conceptual design services.
- Build your exterior improvement project with pre-vetted contractors.
- Receive grant funding for a portion of total project costs.
- Implement corridor improvement projects.
Before: Existing storefront strip between Littlefield St. and Ward Ave.

After: Storefront makeover with updated exterior finishes
Before: Existing storefront strip between Ward Ave. and Sorrento Ave.

After: Storefront makeover with updated exterior finishes
Implement corridor improvement projects

Community stakeholders noted the importance of partnering to build and support strong business associations. Residents want to work collaboratively with the business associations and the City to build corridor-specific design and operating guidelines and a support system to help businesses implement the recommendations.

Community stakeholders recommended that a community-decision-making process be established to craft the future character of the corridors and to ensure that neighborhood change reflects resident desires.

In addition to design guidelines Stakeholders developed an innovative approach— to utilize a “corridor pledge” that reflects community values and how it would like to see businesses operate. The corridor pledge could include preferences for businesses that hire locally, provide employees with a living wage, utilize sustainable building and energy conservation practices, and other values decided by stakeholders. Participating businesses could receive preference for nonprofit, philanthropic, and government support and incentives.

Community stakeholders also discussed their concerns about neighborhood change. For instance, successful revitalization projects often result in the displacement of the same small businesses that served as the catalyst for neighborhood revitalization. One concept supported by stakeholders was community ownership of the commercial properties utilized for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Community ownership would afford the community the ability to make decisions about what types of businesses move into their neighborhoods and future rental rates. Community ownership could take the form of community land trusts or cooperatives, through which stakeholders can control rent increases that affect the desired character of the corridor.

In addition, community stakeholders developed a list of short, medium- and long-term projects to improve the appearance, safety, and perception of the corridor and encourage increased patronage by residents, employees, and visitors. These improvements require a strong partnership between city officials, business owners, residents, institutions, and SGGCDC. Community-generated ideas for improvements include:

- gateway and node beautification,
- corridor marketing,
- increased safety efforts,
- creation/expansion of strong business associations,
- streetscape and green infrastructure improvements,
- parking solutions,
- increased participation in the City’s ‘Green Light’ program,
- improved maintenance of currently vacant lots and spaces,
- façade improvements,
- improvements that serve broader community goals and encourage greater corridor usage and activity, such as area wifi,
- improved area day cares,
- zoning and parking modifications to enhance the corridors and walkability.
Collaborative Innovation: Community ownership of commercial spaces

Community ownership of commercial spaces can help ensure that businesses reflect community needs and values. Community Land Trusts and cooperative ownership of commercial spaces would empower community members to determine the types and character of the businesses. Importantly, as neighborhood improvements expand and commercial rents rise, community ownership could offer continued support to neighborhood-based entrepreneurs through controlled rents.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are nonprofit organizations that retain ownership of the land in real estate transactions to maintain permanently affordable residential or commercial space in communities. A key aspect of a CLT is that they are designed to ensure community stewardship of the land, meaning responsible planning and management of land and its use. Benefits of CLTs include: long-term community control, community wealth-creation, flexible role of the CLT to meet the desires of the unique community, and the underlying mission of stewardship by the CLT, as opposed to profit or individual control. Commercial CLTs can manage an affordable increase in commercial rents when an area has otherwise experienced rent increases that displace small, locally-owned businesses or neighborhood startups that are less competitive to well-established, chain or expensive retailers.

See example: Crescent City Community Land Trust

Strategic Focus Area Two: Economic Security and Wealth-Building

- Expand workforce development and employment opportunities
- Foster family financial security and wealth-building capacity
- Increase home ownership and assets
- Support intergenerational wealth transfer
- Collaborative Innovation: Employer-Assisted Housing
As the neighborhood’s physical appearance improves, SGGCDC will work with partners to prioritize and support existing residents to achieve economic security and to have greater opportunities for economic mobility and wealth-building. Community stakeholders identified four primary goals to support residents:

- Expand workforce development and employment opportunities,
- Foster family financial security and wealth-building capacity,
- Increase home ownership and assets, and
- Support intergenerational wealth transfer.

**Expand workforce development and employment opportunities**

Community stakeholders expressed a strong desire to increase training and employment opportunities for Northwest Detroit residents. Working with workforce development experts and community partners, SGGCDC will:

- Promote existing partners, programs, and resources for workforce development training, apprenticeships, and placement;
- Incorporate training opportunities into revitalization projects;
- Vet, and build relationships with local contractors to support neighborhood revitalization projects; and
- Establish the path of employment and mobility for residents and workers at nearby institutions and businesses.

One unique opportunity in Northwest Detroit is to create additional opportunities for residents to join the workforce within the health care industry. Currently DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital, Wayne County Community College, and Cornerstone Health and Technology High School design and host programs to prepare Detroters for opportunities in the health care industry. In addition, A. Philip Randolph Technical High School and the Breithaupt Career and Technical Center are nearby institutions within the Detroit Public School Community District preparing students for employment in trades, business, equipment operation, hospitality, and culinary arts.

With 21% of the population unemployed within the focus area, physical development, housing rehabilitation, and community-building efforts will struggle to be sustainable unless residents have improved training and employment opportunities.

![Unemployment Rate](chart.png)

Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2016, 5 year estimate, Civilian Labor Force Unemployment Rate
**Foster family financial security and wealth-building capacity**

Currently, residents in the SGGCDC focus face difficult financial challenges. Approximately 73% of renters are housing-cost burdened – or have housing costs that are above 30% of their income. This leaves renters in a precarious situation, often with difficulties paying for food, clothing, transportation, and medical needs. In addition, homeowners face considerable challenges. There are more than 1,200 tax foreclosed homes, with an additional 1,400 up for review in June 2018 facing potential foreclosure. Programs to assist renters and homeowners with utility bills, tax foreclosure prevention, home repair, and financial counseling exist. Through collaboration, SGGCDC and our partners will increase connections and access to these resources and bring additional supports to the neighborhoods where we identify gaps in services.

**Increase home ownership and assets**

Currently, about 23% of the housing in the focus area is vacant. We hope to increase home ownership by matching renters with previously vacant, rehabbed homes, while also connecting them with the necessary supports to remain in their homes and build equity. With most homes valued at less than $100,000, home ownership could be a successful strategy for renters, who are now paying around $800-900 per month in rent, to build equity and gain economic security. Other methods to increase assets and mobility include business ownership and community ownership, e.g. community land trusts and cooperative ownership.

**Support intergenerational wealth transfer**

There has been a significant amount of research pointing to racial disparities in accumulated wealth. Average wealth for white families is seven times higher than average wealth for black families. (Survey of Consumer Finance Combined Extract Data, 2013.) This gap is greater than the gaps in income or wage. SGGCDC seeks to promote equitable revitalization in the neighborhoods we serve and will design strategies to support greater opportunities for family wealth-building and increased opportunities for a family to pass on wealth to the next generation. One of the key strategies to do so is to ensure that the family home, generally the largest family asset, continues to gain in value and is available to support the success of the next generation.

More than 30% of residents we serve are over the age of 55. Many of these residents face significant challenges to remain in their homes due to tax foreclosure, utility costs, and housing maintenance costs. SGGCDC’s goal is to grow our aging in place initiative to support older residents to remain in their homes as they age. In addition to improving the older resident’s quality of life, we hope this enables families to retain their family assets from one generation to the next.
Collaborative Innovation: Employer-Assisted Housing

Across the country, and in Detroit, local institutions, city government, and local financial institutions have partnered to develop successful programs to incentivize home purchases by employees of the local institutions and businesses. This strategy is an important component of neighborhood housing stabilization. It also strengthens the employees’ connection to their workplace, reduces commute times and resource consumption, supports family asset and wealth-building, and supports neighborhood businesses and the local economy.

“Employer-assisted housing refers to any housing program – rental or homeownership – that is financed or assisted by an employer. Examples of employer-assisted housing include down payment assistance, home buyer education and counseling and rental search assistance. Employers have a vested interest in making sure their workers can afford decent homes close to the workplace, which can help them attract and retain necessary employees.”

“Employers can be a tremendous resource even if they do not provide direct housing assistance to employees. By improving access to nearby housing, employers can substantially reduce workers’ commute times, removing a major obstacle to new employee recruitment and improving existing employee retention, morale and productivity. When workers are able to live closer to their jobs, all local residents benefit from decreased traffic congestion and reduced air pollution. Employer involvement in housing initiatives can also contribute to community development in and around workplace facilities. For example, an influx of new homeowners and renters may help to stabilize nearby neighborhoods in need of reinvestment or areas with high rates of foreclosed properties, increasing the desirability of the surrounding environment.”

Source: National Housing Conference. www.nhc.org/policy-guide/employer-assisted-housing-the-basics/

Source: National Housing Conference. www.nhc.org/policy-guide/employer-assisted-housing-the-basics/

Source: Metropolitan Planning Council of Chicago launched its Employer-Assisted Housing (EAH) program, giving employers the opportunity to help employees purchase homes near work.
Residential homes located on Ashton Street in the North Rosedale Park neighborhood of Detroit, Michigan.
Strategic Focus Area Three: Residential Stabilization and Growth

- Promote housing stabilization programs
- Create a housing rehabilitation strategy and pipeline
- Support successful new residential developments
- Inventory and monitor vacant properties
- Increase safety networks and tools
- Organize beautification projects
- Market the neighborhood to promote occupancy and growth

Collaborative Innovation: Aging in Place Initiative
Collaborative Innovation: Northwest Detroit Art Connections
One of the most significant assets in Northwest Detroit is the strong housing stock. The housing is attractive with a variety of architectural styles and strong brick construction in most areas. It is also generally well-maintained, good-quality, affordably-sized, and contiguous. The strong housing stock is supported by active community associations and block clubs and augmented with good quality schools and parks.

Community stakeholders discussed ways to build from these neighborhood assets to move toward stabilization and future growth. Intentional intervention strategies are necessary to support residents and stave off future vacancy and neighborhood decline -- with close to 4,000 vacant units, 1,200 homes in foreclosure, and an additional 1,400 up for review in June 2018 facing potential foreclosure. To facilitate residential stabilization and growth, SGGCDC and stakeholders identified the following key goals:

- Promote housing stabilization programs,
- Create a housing rehabilitation strategy and pipeline,
- Support successful new residential developments,
- Inventory and monitor vacant properties,
- Increase safety networks and tools,
- Organize beautification projects, and
- Market the neighborhood to promote occupancy and growth.

Prioritize housing stabilization
Through partnership, program development, and community engagement, SGGCDC will assist residents to access existing housing programs that provide financing and grants for home improvement and weatherization. We will work with partners to promote programs that reduce tax foreclosures, reduce utility costs, and support home maintenance. We will need to create projects for housing stabilization within the context of an aging population, and the preservation of affordable housing as neighborhood prices increase. Stakeholders also developed several project ideas to promote home and apartment maintenance as a means to stabilize housing and the neighborhood.

Create a housing rehabilitation strategy and pipeline
Though our neighborhoods are largely well-maintained, residents were hit hard by the housing foreclosure crisis and vacant houses need to be rehabsed and put back into use. With the volume of vacant homes, different areas of the neighborhood offer unique challenges and will require layered strategies and funding sources. Through partnerships, SGGCDC will create a pipeline for housing rehab together with a strategy to improve marketability to achieve greater housing occupancy.

Support successful new residential developments
Looking beyond stabilization toward longer term projects, four key areas of work were developed further during the visioning process.

First, there are two new construction projects in the development pipeline that nearby CDCs are leading. Nearby improvements to housing stock, vacant spaces, and commercial amenities would support the success of
these projects. In addition, neighborhood partners are asked to advocate for the recalculation of the walkability score for State-funded projects, as this has been an obstacle for new developments in some of Detroit’s neighborhoods.

Second, there are multiple apartment buildings in need of facade improvements, maintenance, and potential rehab. Renovation projects of multi-unit apartment buildings could improve the quality of life of residents, expand housing types offered to institution employees, and potentially improve energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

Third, there are nearby vacant institutions that could be re-purposed and utilized to meet increasing demand for housing for older adults in Northwest Detroit, for instance, the Coffey Elementary School site.

Lastly, our housing strategy needs to support recent successful projects like Hartford Village. This was a market rate housing project successfully built at a time that few other projects were being considered. SGGCDC can support Hartford Village by working with partners to stabilize the surrounding area and continuing to improve amenities and quality of life in the area.
**Increased Safety Networks and Tools**

Community partners will come together to increase resident safety patrols and improved communication between safety departments and residents.

Coordination could affect the development and growth of neighborhood walking clubs. Residents have an interest in establishing clubs, but would like to coordinate safety escorts and animal control sweeps ahead of the walking group meet ups and other community events.

Residents identified speeding and drag racing on neighborhood streets as an important issue to address. Another suggestion is to arrange for group rates for security and alarms. Residents also noted that bus stop safety should be a top priority.

Radio patrols have been a successful tool to promote more ‘eyes on the streets’, increase safety and the perception of safety, and to bring neighbors together. The City of Detroit has a budget to reimburse radio patrols. In addition to connecting more resident associations and block clubs with this resource, partners would like to engage local churches to institute radio patrols to better connect residents and visiting congregants.

**Beautification Projects**

Residents would like an emphasis on beautification at neighborhood gateways and main thoroughfares. Tree plantings, perennial bulb plantings, art installations, neighborhood signage, murals, gardens, and clean-ups were identified as key projects for short and medium-term beautification.

**Market neighborhoods to promote occupancy and growth**

Marketing of the neighborhood assets and history can help to support neighborhood cohesion and pride and also promote the neighborhood to future residents. Resident participants are excited about developing events and groups to uplift their neighborhoods’ histories and assets. One potential project includes creating events in neighbors’ homes or porches to share stories of individual residents and the history of the neighborhoods, like "Pedal to Porch". Another project, Northwest Detroit Art Connections, is the creation of art that helps to identify the uniqueness of area’s neighborhoods and to connect them across Northwest Detroit, along Outer Drive.

**Collaborative Innovation: Aging in Place Initiative**

SGGCDC has launched an early action project which serves to support residential stability and to increase intergenerational wealth transfer. In 2018, we launched our Aging in Place Initiative that focuses on making aging in community more affordable, healthy, safe, and convenient. The program includes weatherization improvements for low-mod income seniors, tax foreclosure prevention, and safety and walkability components. We are supporting seniors to age in place and to retain their family assets to support their needs and those of their family’s next generations. Because older adults over the age of 55 make up more than 30% of our neighborhoods, their own stability and ability to age in place greatly affects neighborhood stability.
Collaborative Innovation: Northwest Detroit Art

Northwest Detroit Art Connections is a potential future project to create visible connections and relationships between the neighborhoods with creative, community-led art installations.

The art installations serve to connect the neighborhoods along Outer Drive. The project also connects different age groups: a local artist working with youth at Renaissance High School (located on Outer Drive) will plan, design, and create the art installations with other community residents, including older adults.

This project can serve as a spark to see the boulevard as a lovely, active, playful corridor.

Planned Residential Developments

Amandla Community Development Corporation plans to develop approximately 160 affordable housing units for older adults, South of Outer Drive, east of the Southfield Freeway.

Resurrection Community Development Corporation plans to develop approximately 80 units of Coop Housing in its first phase. The 2-3 bedroom co-ops are planned for the vacant lots north of Outer Drive, east of Southfield Freeway.
Renovated Skinner Park next to Denby High School
Strategic Focus Area Four: Open Space and Parks

Create and maintain beautiful and vibrant parks
Enhance programming in parks and open space
Activate or plant vacant, under-used open spaces
Collaborative Innovation: DMC Sinai-Grace Green Walk
Strategic Focus Area Four: Open Space and Parks

Existing parks

**College Park**
1. Arthur Park
2. Bale Playground
3. Varier Playground

**Winship**
4. Peterson Playfield
5. Dr. A.W. Diack Playground

**Crary/St. Mary’s**
6. Kelley Playground
7. Fields Playground

**Hubbell Puritan**
8. Puritan Coyle Park
Northwest Detroit has beautiful parks, there are three in College Park, two in Winship, two in Crary / St. Mary’s, and one in Hubble-Puritan. Community stakeholder generated key goals to improve the area’s open space and parks:

- Create and maintain beautiful and vibrant parks,
- Enhance programming in parks and open space, and
- Activate or plant vacant, under-used open spaces.

**Create and maintain beautiful and vibrant parks**

Neighborhoods in Northwest Detroit have beautiful parks. Suggested enhancements include improved restroom facilities, improved playscapes, well-maintained lighting, security, and boulders to deter cars.

Park programming can be supported by dedicated spaces and structures – concert stages, outdoor theatres, pavilions, creative play places – that can house events, gatherings, and celebrations. These dedicated areas for programming support neighborhood cohesion, shared experiences of fun, and activities for residents of all ages.

**Covered Stages:** can be used for concerts, performances, and rallies, and also doubles as theater for movie nights.

**Pavilion:** When located at important intersections between public institutions, greenways, parks and business corridors, a pavilion can house art installations or centers for activity and gatherings.
**Creative Playscapes:** Update existing parks with new equipment that use bright colors and asymmetrical shapes to inspire creative play.

- Dedicated areas in parks and public spaces serve as a reminder to the users of the communal experience of neighborhood activities.
- Dedicated areas can embed the neighborhood's values and history into the built environment and bring awareness of the community's identity.
- Shape and color bring visual connection between spaces and bridge gaps between community assets.

**Enhance programming in parks and open space**
Suggested enhancements also included programming with special events, festivals, exercise opportunities, farmers’ markets, and music. To start, several participating neighborhoods would like assistance to organize walking clubs, coordinated with local security patrols that incorporate residents who are veterans of the military or Detroit Police Department.

**Activate or plant vacant, under-used open spaces**
Community stakeholders would like to see existing open spaces and vacant lots activated with special events, art installations, low-maintenance gardens, sculptures, landscaped pocket parks that include rain water management demonstration gardens, and small-scale amenities such as benches, little libraries, and liter bins. Some ideas generated included: chess parks, yoga parks, dog parks, movies in the park, and pollinator gardens.

Community art is a way for residents to contribute to the future of the neighborhood and feel pride in defining their identity. One suggestion was to create after-school activities in which artists and parents guide youth in “Paint the Street” activities. Youth are given the opportunity to express themselves, while learning from artists. The art remains as a permanent part of the street.
Palmer Park's Splash Park: consists of many colorful spouts that spray out water in many directions

Szafraniec Park: owned by the city of Detroit and maintained by the Hope of Detroit Academy

Pollinator Park: filled with perennials to assist the environment and create a healthy ecosystem

Pollinator Park: self-sustaining garden green space creates a gathering space and enhances its surroundings.
Collaborative Innovation: DMC Sinai-Grace Green Walk

Residents would like to see green space with programming, sustainable plantings, and art that serves as a connector between schools, institutions, and commercial corridors. DMC Sinai-Grace Green Walk would serve to connect employees and visitors from the hospital to the businesses on McNichols, opening up the corridor to greater pedestrian traffic and providing enjoyable amenities to hospital employees and visitors.

DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital can add a connection to the surrounding community from its own campus with the DMC Sinai-Grace Green Walk. As illustrated on the right, the proposed greenway utilizes the existing green space between the Main Visitor Parking Lot and the E.R. Lot, then meets with an existing alley to the south, linking the hospital campus with the McNichols business corridor. The proposed path and alley provide a recreational walkway from parking to the hospital, with improved storm water management and a plaza where food trucks, music, vendors, and other activities can pop-up during lunch hours.

Green Garage Green Ally: The presence of natural features increase mental and physical comfort. It also improves the feeling of safety and desirability. Green space provides inspiration for thought, calmness, and mindful activity. Since 2010, the Green Alley in Midtown has become a popular pedestrian path and walking space for residents, workers, and visitors. Native plants makes for a beautiful space that drastically reduces storm water drainage, and pavement heat. Including major repairs to water lines, the alley at the Green Garage took only two months to complete.
DMC Sinai-Grace proposed Greenwalk Map: The green alley and walkway connect to form a place for recreation and activity, while connecting the hospital to McNichols businesses.
Strategic Focus Area Five: Mobility and Sustainability

Create well-designed streets
Enhance green infrastructure
Improve safe routes to schools
Improve transit options and bus stops
Build neighborhood greenways and biking amenities
Host sustainability programs and education
Create a community resiliency plan
Implement energy efficiency, water conservation, and sustainability improvements

Collaborative Innovation: Outer Drive Greenway and Neighborhood Connector Paths
Community stakeholders discussed ways to improve mobility and neighborhood sustainability. SGGCDC and stakeholders identified the following key goals:

- Create well-designed streets,
- Enhance green infrastructure,
- Improve safe routes to schools,
- Improve transit options and bus stops,
- Build neighborhood greenways and biking amenities,
- Host sustainability programs and education, and
- Create a community resiliency plan, and
- Implement energy efficiency, water conservation, and sustainability improvements.

Create well-designed streets
Stakeholders identified several current challenges with regard to street-design, including traffic speed and congestion on commercial corridors and thoroughfares, drag racing on residential streets, street flooding, and dangerous conditions around schools during drop-off and pick-up. Well-designed streets can address these concerns, making commercial corridors more pedestrian-friendly and residential areas safer. Improved streetscaping, curb cuts, and design would make walking through the neighborhood feel safer and more enjoyable. Another safety concern is the visibility at corners because of parking and tall grass. Residents also wanted to see use of permeable surfaces for future projects.

Enhance green infrastructure
Community stakeholders identified goals for enhancing green infrastructure: tree plantings and greening, particularly to serve as a buffer to high traffic areas and freeways; storm water management systems; gray water system development; and enhanced median greenery. Stakeholders would like to see more green infrastructure incorporated into any future developments, updated street projects, and other neighborhood improvements.

Improve safe routes to schools
Resident and schools identified the continued need to ensure that blight and vacant buildings are addressed in the areas around schools. There are many vacant lots with overgrown bushes and weeds as well as scattered debris and dumping. Residents would like to see projects that beautify and make safer the areas around schools. The discussion also included the need for improved crosswalks and traffic control near the schools. Currently, pick-up and drop off times are particularly dangerous around Renaissance, FLICS, and Old Redford.

Improve transit options and bus stops
Residents noted the need for additional bus stops on McNichols as well as the need to improve area bus stops. Residents also wants to see seating at all bus stops – currently people tip the trash cans over to create seating while waiting for buses. Residents suggested interactive seating at bus stops, with mini libraries and activities under the seats.
Traffic Count on Outer Drive
23,890 cars per day on Greenfield (SEMCOG 2004),
21,680 cars per day on West Outer Drive (SEMCOG 2011)

Existing Outer Drive Boulevard section view.

Bike Boulevard illustrated section: Greenery separating the bike path from road, maintaining safety for drivers and cyclists.

An illustrated section of Outer Drive if a green boulevard, with plantings, walking paths, park benches, bike paths, and (bike) stations were incorporated into the boulevard.
Build neighborhood greenways and biking amenities
Community stakeholders identified potential greenway routes to connect neighborhood parks for walkers and bikers. In addition to greenways within the neighborhoods to connect parks, residents would like to see on-street bike lanes for thoroughfares, and potentially a greenway running along the median on Outer Drive. One suggestion was to create rubberized bike and walking paths created from repurposed tires, which could be processed locally. Residents also expressed an interest in the installation of MoGo Bike Stations, biking events, bike maintenance workshops, and other fun activities to encourage biking.

Host sustainability programs and education
Stakeholders would like to see SGGCDC and partners how community conversations and programs around sustainability, home weatherization, expanded recycling participation, institutional energy efficiency improvements, and alternative energy projects.

Create a community resiliency plan
Stakeholders would like to co-create a detailed resiliency plan for sustainability, energy efficiency enhancements, and environmental stewardship. This would guide future development, incorporating sustainable design in new developments and rehabilitation projects. This opportunity could also greatly increase technical knowledge about sustainability.

Implement energy efficiency, water conservation, and sustainability improvements
Currently, SGGCDC is working with partners to implement our Weatherize Northwest pilot program. Starting with 30 homes, we will be facilitating energy audits and weatherization for low-income seniors. Through this program SGGCDC will also support other households to get connected with available resources to reduce energy loss and costs.

Community stakeholders identified other potential future programs: increase recycling programs (residents, businesses, and institutions), expand understanding and installation of solar-powered lighting, and install grey water reuse demonstration projects and rain water collection projects. Stakeholders would like to see improved street and infrastructure planning, maintenance, and improvements to beautify the avenues, manage flooding, and slow traffic for greater pedestrian-accessibility. Improvements could include plantings, green infrastructure, and sidewalk extensions.

Extending the sidewalk to the street makes for a more comfortable space for walking. Further extending curbs at intersections makes drivers more aware of the pedestrian presence, and creates designated parking lanes, protecting for parked cars from being rear-ended. Natural plantings and landscaping on the sidewalks help to manage rain water and auto mobile pollution. Greenery at the edge of the sidewalk beautifies the corridor. Raised beds act as a buffer between automobile traffic and pedestrians.

McNichols: Curb extensions, plantings, and crosswalk treatments create a more attractive street and build community pride. The presence of natural elements will make for a more calming environment for pedestrians, increasing the perception of safety and walkability.

Schaefer: Bioswales manage storm water, filter pollutants, and beautify the area. Bioswales contain plantings and reduce the amount of hard, impervious surface so that flooding is minimized, and rain water is diverted from the sewer system.
Bioswale: A long, channeled trench that receives rainwater runoff (as from a parking lot or street) and has vegetation (such as grasses, flowering herbs, and shrubs) and organic matter (such as mulch) to slow water infiltration and filter out pollutants.

Curb Extensions: Extend the sidewalk at intersections to give the walkway a presence and provide visual stimulation for drivers to slow down.

Crosswalk Improvements: City of Detroit proposed raised pedestrian bridge crosswalk improvements to slow traffic.
What is Sustainability?
Sustainability is complex. Broadly it means that we are meeting the needs of the current community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability means that we are making choices that support a healthy environment and economy and that focus on equitable decisions to support the community.

Sustainable Neighborhoods
A sustainable neighborhood is one in which the individuals, organizations, building owners, and institutions make decisions that make sense for the environment, help to grow the community’s financial health, and promote opportunities for equitable development and growth for all residents. Sustainable neighborhoods, with youth involved in leadership, look toward the future, with a focus on environmental stewardship, equity, and healthy residents.

Sustainable neighborhoods include:
• Beautiful physical spaces in which residents can enjoy outdoor activities and reconnect with nature.
• Natural landscaping to mitigate urban pollution and manage resources (like storm water) effectively.
• Opportunities for residents to grow and purchase fresh produce to sustain their healthy lifestyles.
• An Environment where residents are able to be health, because the neighborhood is healthy. (reduced crime, noise and pollution mitigation, financial stability, access to fresh and healthy foods, access to decent medical care, safe and high-quality housing).
• A thriving economy in which businesses meet the needs of residents and residents and visitors support local entrepreneurs.
• Strong networks of residents who have formed a way to build community consensus and make decisions about the future of the neighborhood.

Collaborative Innovation:
Outer Drive Greenway and Neighborhood Connector Paths
Community stakeholders identified potential greenway routes to connect neighborhood parks for walkers and bikers.

Example of a successful road conversion transforming 4-lanes (left) into two lanes with center turn lanes, bike lanes, pedestrian refuge island at bus stop (right).

Example rendering of a proposed bike boulevard in a commercial setting.
Green Boulevard: A bicycle boulevard would consist of a bike lane along the sidewalk with a buffer of native plant life between car bicyclist and street traffic. Space between Bicyclist and sidewalk is an excellent place for tree plantings. The use of cement alternatives and porous walkway materials can add to the beautification and drainage of water from the path and street.
MLK community service Day “Spruce Up”, volunteers help paint and provide minor home repairs to spruce up homes in the neighborhood.
Strategic Focus Area Six: Community-Building and Enhanced Quality of Life

- Expand aging in place initiatives
- Strengthen connections between generations
- Expand opportunities for exercise and fun
- Increase access to fresh produce
- Create opportunities for information sharing
- Intensify efforts to improve social determinants of health
- Emphasize trauma-informed community development

Collaborative Innovation:
"Senior Village" Community Association

Collaborative Innovation:
Trauma-Informed Community-Building
Community stakeholders discussed additional ways to build stronger community networks and improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods that SGGCDC serves. Some of the key goals included:

- Expand aging in place initiatives,
- Strengthen connections between generations,
- Expand opportunities for exercise and fun,
- Increase access to fresh produce,
- Create opportunities for information sharing, and
- Intensify efforts to improve social determinants of health, and
- Emphasize trauma-informed community development,

**Expand aging in place initiatives**

SGGCDC’s current aging in place initiative focuses on affordable housing costs and neighborhood safety and walkability. There are many more aspects and opportunities that residents have identified to improve the quality of life for older adults and to support them to age in place. Some of the needs identified by residents in the revitalization framework include: home modifications for older adults, increased job training and placement opportunities for older adults, and crime education and prevention.

Metro-In-Home Solutions (an LLC created through a partnership of Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, Southwest Solutions, Presbyterian Villages of Michigan, Jewish Family Service of Metropolitan Detroit) is a community-based business that installs modifications in homes of older adults, veterans, and residents with mobility challenges. They install ramps, hand rails, levered door handles, bathroom modifications, kitchen modifications, chair and wheelchair lifts, doorways widened, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and universal design floor coverings. Community stakeholders would like to secure funding for and bring this resource to the neighborhoods in Northwest Detroit.

**Strengthen connections between generations**

Throughout the framework process, residents expressed a hope to build more bridges between generations. Some of the ideas residents had are highlighted elsewhere – increased programming in parks, community building events. Community stakeholders were particularly interested in events that build connections through story-telling and oral history projects.

**Expand opportunities for exercise and fun**

Residents would like to work with existing schools and churches to gain access to the gyms, auditoriums, and potentially computer facilities when these are not otherwise in use. Northwest Activities Center is a tremendous community space and many activities are held there. However, stakeholders are interested in expanding these opportunities.

**Increase access to fresh produce**

Residents would like to see more options for fresh produce and specifically build stronger connection to Detroit’s strong urban agriculture network and existing resources. Detroit’s Eastern Market already has transport on Saturdays, leaving from the Northwest Activities Center. DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital hosts a farm stand for employees and visitors. These resources can be promoted and replicated. Residents would like to see farm stands in the commercial corridors and eventually vegetable markets in currently vacant storefronts.

**Create opportunities for information sharing**

Community stakeholders would like to see kiosks, newsletters, communication hubs, informal gathering spaces for residents – and dedicated gathering spaces for business owners to build a stronger business community.
“Senior Village” Community Association
During our visioning process, residents were very interested in the “Senior Village” concept (like Beacon Hill Village in Boston), where older adults work collectively to meet needs, organize group discounts, and build community cohesion and connectivity. While SGGCDC has already begun working with residents to build connectivity, a “Senior Village” would enable older adults to co-create a more formal structure to do so.

This would require development of the organizational and decision-making structure. Through a “Senior Village”, residents could negotiate discounted services, such as lawn maintenance, home repair, security services, snow removal, grocery delivery, home health care providers, and discount prescription drug cards. The Village could also organize group transportation to free concerts downtown, free movies in New Center, other events, or stores. The Village could also coordinate social events and exercise programs and wellness programs.

For more information: www.beaconhillvillage.org/
**Intensify efforts to improve social determinants of health**

Increased economic stability, environmental quality, community connections, safety, and neighborhood walkability improve health outcomes. The neighborhoods that SGGCDC serve have higher rates of asthma, diabetes, COPD, and obesity than is typical for the region. Community stakeholders want revitalization work in the area to address the physical, social, and economic factors that lead residents in the area to have health challenges.

**Emphasize trauma-informed community development**

Already an incredible community resource, DLive which is located inside DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital, exists to serve youth who are survivors of violence and to support them to lead safe and healthy lives after they leave the hospital. This program is leading the way to think differently about community revitalization. Community stakeholders wanted our collective work to be intentional and informed by what survivors of trauma need to lead healthy lives. This intention takes many forms, but fundamentally it means that we cannot merely revitalize the physical space — we must prioritize resident needs in a holistic way that does not ignore the reality of trauma in residents’ experiences.

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**Trauma Informed Community Building**

“Trauma Informed Community Building (TICB) recognizes the impact of pervasive trauma on a community and creates a process to address the resulting challenges to traditional community building approaches. Through intentional strategies that de-escalate chaos and stress, build social cohesion and foster community resiliency over time, TICB can increase the community’s readiness to engage in traditional community building efforts. The outcomes of effective TICB are the conditions for sustainable individual and community change. They are also the foundation and support for a coordinated program and service delivery system that can address individual and community needs such as mental and physical healthcare, educational attainment, economic self-sufficiency, safety, and healthy child development.”


An inspirational video about Trauma-Informed Community Development is Paul Abernathy’s TedX Talk: https://youtu.be/kcbu58p0fB4
Neighborhood Asset Mapping and Story-Telling and Connections

Resident participants are excited about developing events and groups to uplift their neighborhoods’ histories and assets. One potential projects include creating events in neighbors’ homes or porches to share stories of individual residents and the history of the neighborhoods. Another project is the creation of art that helps to identify the uniqueness of area’s neighborhoods and to connect them across NW Detroit.

Pedal to Porch offers a new spin on storytelling events. It is a neighborhood bike ride that includes stops along a route where residents use their front porch as a stage to tell their story. Storytellers deliver a five-minute story about a significant event that occurred in their home or on their street. The bike ride lowers the barrier of connection between neighbors, initiates new conversations, and celebrates local history.

Storytelling celebrates the human spirit.

Storytelling creates community.

Storytelling feeds the soul.

Storytelling is for everyone.

Words by Cornetta Lane
Neighborhood clean up
Strategic Focus Area Seven: Leadership and Neighborhood Capacity Development

- Strengthen the resident leadership network
- Utilize participatory decision-making tools
- Build the Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Support a Youth Advisory Group
Residents in the area are well-organized and engaged. During the framework development, CDCs that participated in the process included: Amandla Community Development Corporation, Resurrection Community Development Corporation Community, and Joy-Gem Community Development Corporation. Neighborhood associations and block clubs throughout the area meet regularly and organize community events, workshops, service projects, and clean-ups. There are also many religious institutions (listed elsewhere) who lead significant neighborhood and community development efforts. SGGCDC worked with resident organizations in Winship, College Park, Crary / St. Mary’s, Belmont, Hubbell-Puritan, and Bethune to develop this process and document their vision and ideas. The area has many active leaders and a strong network of organizations. Stakeholders identified the need to continue building these networks and strengthening their collective capacity to advocate for and revitalize their neighborhoods in Northwest Detroit. The key goals developed include:

- Strengthen the resident leadership network,
- Utilize participatory decision-making tools,
- Build the Stakeholder Advisory Group, and
- Support a Youth Advisory Group.

**Strengthen the resident leadership network**

There is an existing network of resident leaders across neighborhoods. Community stakeholders recommended that SGGCDC support leaders who serve as representatives to coordinate and collaborate on common goals. Support development of block clubs and facilitate creation of a quick-reach communication network (email, phone, and door-to-door outreach network).

**Utilize participatory decision-making tools**

Participatory budgeting and planning techniques and tools help to engage residents in decision-making. Community stakeholders have indicated a strong desire that revitalization decisions be driven by residents and that processes are increasingly democratic. There are many useful tools to facilitate participatory decision-making, one example is for participatory budgeting found here: [www.participatorybudgeting.org](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org/)

**Build the Stakeholder Advisory Group**

Resident leaders, technical assistance partners, and City of Detroit staff meet quarterly to coordinate area-wide decisions, planning and development efforts, and cross-organization collaborations. This group met regularly as the Steering Committee during the development of this framework. We hope to continue to build and make this group one that has deep representation from the community and that has increasing ability to make collective decisions for the area’s future.

**Support a Youth Advisory Group**

This could development into a network of youth who participate in the SAG in a youth-led environment, during which youth can provide recommendations and participate in neighborhood decision-making processes. It is important that youth participate in the SAG, but also have their own space to lead conversations about the neighborhood future, without interference from older participants.
Collaborative Innovation:
Leadership development training opportunities for residents

With the intention of building a strong resident decision-making process across several neighborhoods, training opportunities could include real estate development, financing and grant writing, and other topic trainings to provide a common foundation for resident decision-making processes.

Often community development practitioners are afforded the opportunity for training or to learn about models in other neighborhoods or cities. It is important for residents to directly access some of these learning opportunities, rather than have the information and experience filtered through someone else. For starters, we could organize resident leaders to visit other neighborhoods across the city to learn from Detroiters who are creating innovative projects and revitalizing spaces that serve their neighborhoods. Through the Stakeholder Advisory Group and the network of community associations and block clubs, we can develop a broad communication network to promote leadership development trainings.