

SOULSVILLE USA - MEMPHIS, TN

Revitalization Action Plan

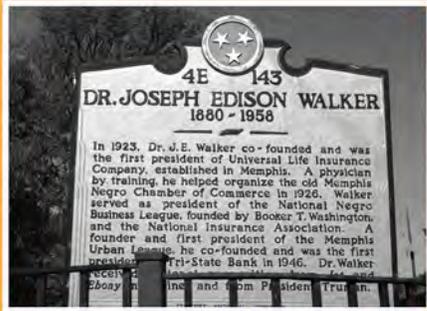


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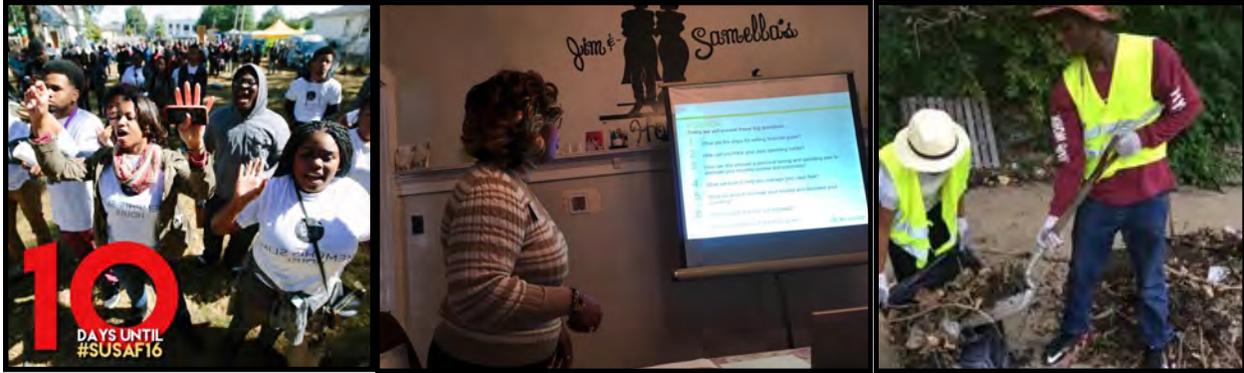


MISSION

Our mission is to enhance, strengthen, and empower the residents of Soulsville USA while creating a safe, inviting, diverse and economically sustainable community.

VISION

To improve and enhance the quality of life in Soulsville USA by dedicating ourselves to finding solutions to blight in order to create a thriving and safe community; to be a neighborhood that targets public safety through education and collaborative efforts; and to be a community where businesses and entrepreneurs flourish.



Left: Neighborhood youth at SUSA event. **Middle:** SUSA Small Business Symposium held at Jim and Samella's. **Right:** Youth participating in summer youth job program cleaning up the neighborhood.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2012, Community LIFT— a local nonprofit organization whose purpose is to revitalize neighborhoods through strategic investments in the area of human capacity building, and economic and community development that results in sustainable thriving communities — received a multi-year grant from the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP). The BNCP was introduced under the Obama Administration Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI). The NRI is a collaborative of five federal agencies – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the U.S. Department of Education – all working together to transform distressed neighborhoods into healthy communities.

Memphis was one of four cities nationally selected in the competition. Soulsville USA was among three local neighborhoods chosen to participate in the grant. Frayser and The Heights neighborhoods were the other two. Soulsville USA is situated in South Memphis and is best known as the birthplace of American soul music. It is bound by E.H. Crump Blvd. on the north, Bellevue Blvd. on the east, Lauderdale (now Willie Mitchell) on the west, and South Parkway East on the south and incorporates census tracts 46, 59, 115 and 116.

The neighborhood is also rich in historical and cultural heritage. It houses LeMoyne-Owen College, a HBCU (Historically Black College/University), which traces its history from 1862. Soulsville USA was also the home of Joseph Edison Walker, an African American businessman who established Universal Life Insurance Company in 1923. Universal Life became one of the largest black-owned insurance companies in the nation. In 1946, Mr. Walker also co-founded Tri-State Bank of Memphis with his son A. Maceo Walker. At its' peak, Tri-State Bank was one of the largest black-owned financial institutions in Tennessee. Numerous other examples of cultural and historical assets of Soulsville USA demonstrate the ingenuity and fortitude of early residents and the institutions they created.

The Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan is the final product of the federally-funded Building Neighborhood Capacity Program, an 18-month resident-driven planning process, occurring from February 2015 - September 2016. The planning period brought together community stakeholders which included residents, business owners, area churches, nonprofits, local government, and others to focus on viable and sustainable community revitalization efforts. During this time, they learned that the action plan must be intentional, strategic, proactive, comprehensive, data-driven, results-driven, and supported. The Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan is a living document that will be used to guide the work of the implementation team over the next three years (2017-2019). It is a roadmap that can be adjusted and amended as needed.

Residents and other community stakeholders selected three areas of focus that were sub-divided by teams: Blight Elimination, Crime Prevention and Public Safety, and Housing and Economic Development. There was also a Community Engagement team that was integrated within the three teams. The Blight Elimination team's strategies address the problem of abandoned properties, litter and associated crime that negatively affect residents and the larger community economically, socially, and emotionally. Their vision is for Soulsville USA to be a place dedicated to finding solutions to blight in order to create a thriving, safe, economically-viable community for everyone, now and in the future. The Crime Prevention and Public Safety team's strategies address the lack of positive exposure at an early age to learning opportunities that fosters accountability,

moral values, and a sustainable support system. Their vision is for Soulsville USA to be a community that targets criminal activity through training and education with full collaboration of police, city officials, and neighborhood partners so that the community becomes a place where crime is not an option. The Housing and Economic Development team's strategies address the problem of limited opportunities for Soulsville USA residents to produce income. Their vision is for Soulsville USA to be a community where businesses and entrepreneurs flourish and create income generating opportunities for residents in the neighborhood.

Throughout the course of the planning period, residents and other stakeholders participated in more than fifty community engagement exercises which included leadership development training, conferences, neighborhood tours, meetings, community festivals, newsletters, creative design labs, and many other place-based activities. During the final community engagement event, "The State of the Neighborhood: Soulsville Town Hall Meeting", residents and other stakeholders previewed the plan, celebrated completing the planning process, and learned about the next steps for the neighborhood.

These ideas are expounded upon herein to create the Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan, also known as SUSARAP.



PART ONE INTRODUCTION



Background

Memphis was awarded the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program grant in 2012. Community LIFT (“Leveraging Investments For Transformation”) was selected to be the lead agency on behalf of the city of Memphis. The program kicked off in Frayser and The Heights (northern Binghampton). The final neighborhood chosen was Soulsville USA in February 2015. These neighborhoods were selected after a five month public and evidenced-based process that was outlined in the Greater Memphis Neighborhoods Plan (GMN). The Greater Memphis Partnership, using the GMN data-driven approach—Strategic Framework for Prioritizing Investments Community Assessment Tool—measured and scored ten (10) distinctive needs and six (6) assets of a neighborhood. The three neighborhoods are diverse in size, location and type, and presented excellent pilot prospects for forward-thinking solutions for the formation of best practices citywide.

**“If you want to go fast,
 go alone. If you want
 to go far, go together.”**

- African Proverb



Top Left: Dr. Femi Ajanaku, LeMoyne Owen College Professor attending the community library box. **Top Right:** Rev. Marlon Foster of Knowledge Quest discussing the benefits of the Green Leaf Learning Farm. **Bottom Left:** Soulsville USA Representatives in Washington, DC for a grantee convening. Pictured from left to right are James Carter (resident), Katie Morales (Community LIFT), Rebecca Matlock Hutchinson, Soulsville USA Site Director, and Henry Ford (resident). **Bottom Right:** Tsedey Betru facilitating a work session with residents.

While the neighborhoods selected possess significant challenges to developing revitalization plans such as deep levels of racial and economic segregation, apathy, access to influential social and political capital, and under-investment, they hold an array of opportunities that if planned properly, invested in and nurtured, the assets of these neighborhoods will add to the distinctiveness, vibrancy and quality of life that position Memphis for new heights.

What has been evident throughout this process, is that every individual, every organization, and every business has a role to play in revitalizing the community. Partnerships and collaborations are paramount to the success of neighborhood revitalization. Residents, business community, colleges and universities, hospitals, churches and other faith-based institutions, nonprofits, government, schools, sign up here! We need you.

Building Neighborhood Capacity Program

The Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP) was introduced by the Obama Administration under the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative in 2011. The purpose of the program is a collaborative initiative of five federal agencies: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Justice, Department of Health and Human Services,

Department of The Treasury, and Department of Education.

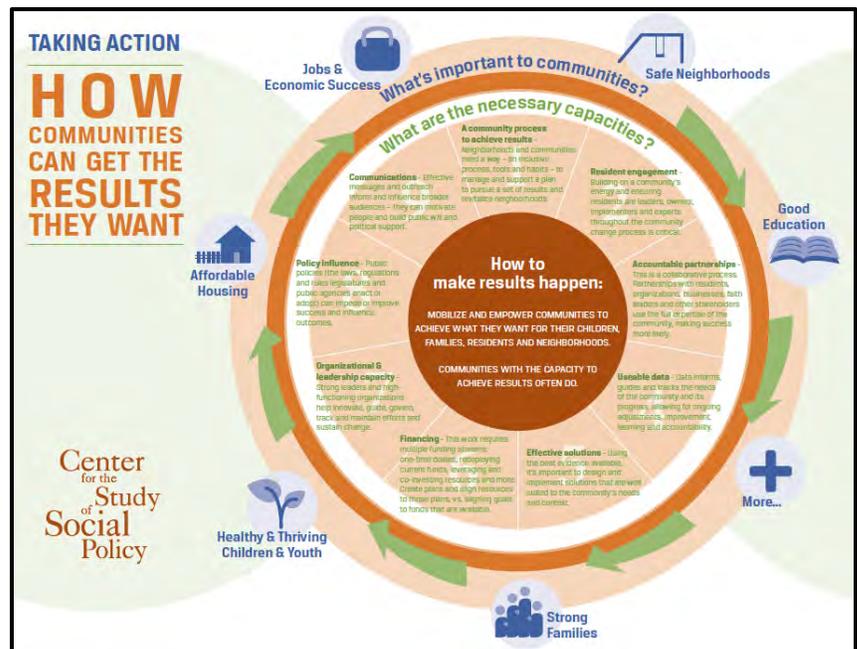


Figure 1 - BNCP Capacity Wheel

One may wonder “why these five agencies?” Their concerns—decent and affordable housing, safe streets, accessible health and human services, a thriving economy and a quality educational system—are the elements that a solid foundation is built upon to help create a desirable community.

In many ways, it offers a push in the direction that the community has been desiring to go but did not have the resources to do before. BNCP provides communities with a framework. For many neighborhoods, regardless to how involved the residents may be - moving from ideas to action often leaves people feeling confused and frustrated. BNCP provides residents with tools and resources to teach them to navigate bureaucracies of municipalities, and build the infrastructure necessary to access resources needed to empower and equip them to impact change and become decision makers in their community for better results around economic development, employment, public safety, housing and other key areas. BNCP also encourages residents to think outside of the box and to learn to do things differently.

“Bringing people to a community to live, work, or spend leisure time requires a working neighborhood system.”

- HUD Homes and Neighborhood Guide

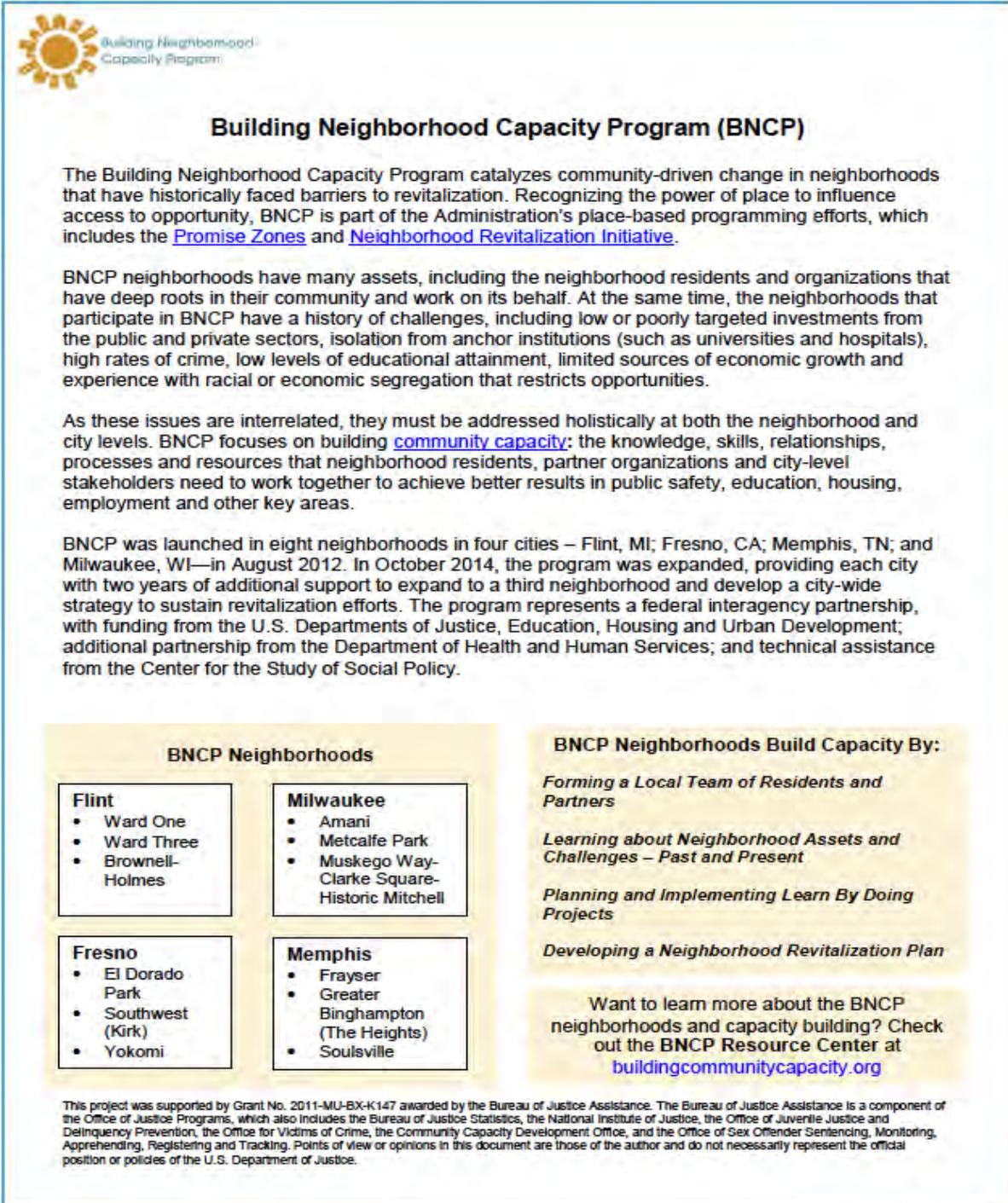
For Memphis and other selected cities across the country, BNCP represented a unique opportunity to leverage resources, advance priorities, and respond to community needs from simple problems like getting grass cut on vacant lots to more serious issues such as crime that sometimes prevents children from going outside to play in their front yards. A distinctive feature of BNCP is the critical lesson about the importance of residents be-

coming empowered to arrive at the point of solution for themselves, thus becoming their own agent. Residents are at the forefront of planning efforts and problem solving to bring about positive changes.



This initiative aligned with the city of Memphis’ recent paradigm shift in its approach to transforming neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into neighborhoods of opportunity. BNCP has also offered an excellent opportunity to develop a strategic plan for the community. (See Figure 2 for a summary of the BNCP)

Figure 2: BNCP Factsheet



Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP)

The Building Neighborhood Capacity Program catalyzes community-driven change in neighborhoods that have historically faced barriers to revitalization. Recognizing the power of place to influence access to opportunity, BNCP is part of the Administration’s place-based programming efforts, which includes the [Promise Zones](#) and [Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative](#).

BNCP neighborhoods have many assets, including the neighborhood residents and organizations that have deep roots in their community and work on its behalf. At the same time, the neighborhoods that participate in BNCP have a history of challenges, including low or poorly targeted investments from the public and private sectors, isolation from anchor institutions (such as universities and hospitals), high rates of crime, low levels of educational attainment, limited sources of economic growth and experience with racial or economic segregation that restricts opportunities.

As these issues are interrelated, they must be addressed holistically at both the neighborhood and city levels. BNCP focuses on building [community capacity](#): the knowledge, skills, relationships, processes and resources that neighborhood residents, partner organizations and city-level stakeholders need to work together to achieve better results in public safety, education, housing, employment and other key areas.

BNCP was launched in eight neighborhoods in four cities – Flint, MI; Fresno, CA; Memphis, TN; and Milwaukee, WI—in August 2012. In October 2014, the program was expanded, providing each city with two years of additional support to expand to a third neighborhood and develop a city-wide strategy to sustain revitalization efforts. The program represents a federal interagency partnership, with funding from the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, Housing and Urban Development; additional partnership from the Department of Health and Human Services; and technical assistance from the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

BNCP Neighborhoods	
Flint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward One • Ward Three • Brownell-Holmes 	Milwaukee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amani • Metcalfe Park • Muskego Way-Clarke Square-Historic Mitchell
Fresno <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • El Dorado Park • Southwest (Kirk) • Yokomi 	Memphis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frayser • Greater Binghampton (The Heights) • Soulsville

BNCP Neighborhoods Build Capacity By:

- Forming a Local Team of Residents and Partners*
- Learning about Neighborhood Assets and Challenges – Past and Present*
- Planning and Implementing Learn By Doing Projects*
- Developing a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*

Want to learn more about the BNCP neighborhoods and capacity building? Check out the [BNCP Resource Center at buildingcommunitycapacity.org](#)

This project was supported by Grant No. 2011-MU-BX-K147 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, the Community Capacity Development Office, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Neighborhood Plan Development

From the onset, readers should understand that the Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan is a living working document. In other words, the plan will serve as a roadmap that will aide in keeping the community on track to implement projects vetted by the planning team. The plan and its' projects can be amended as needed.

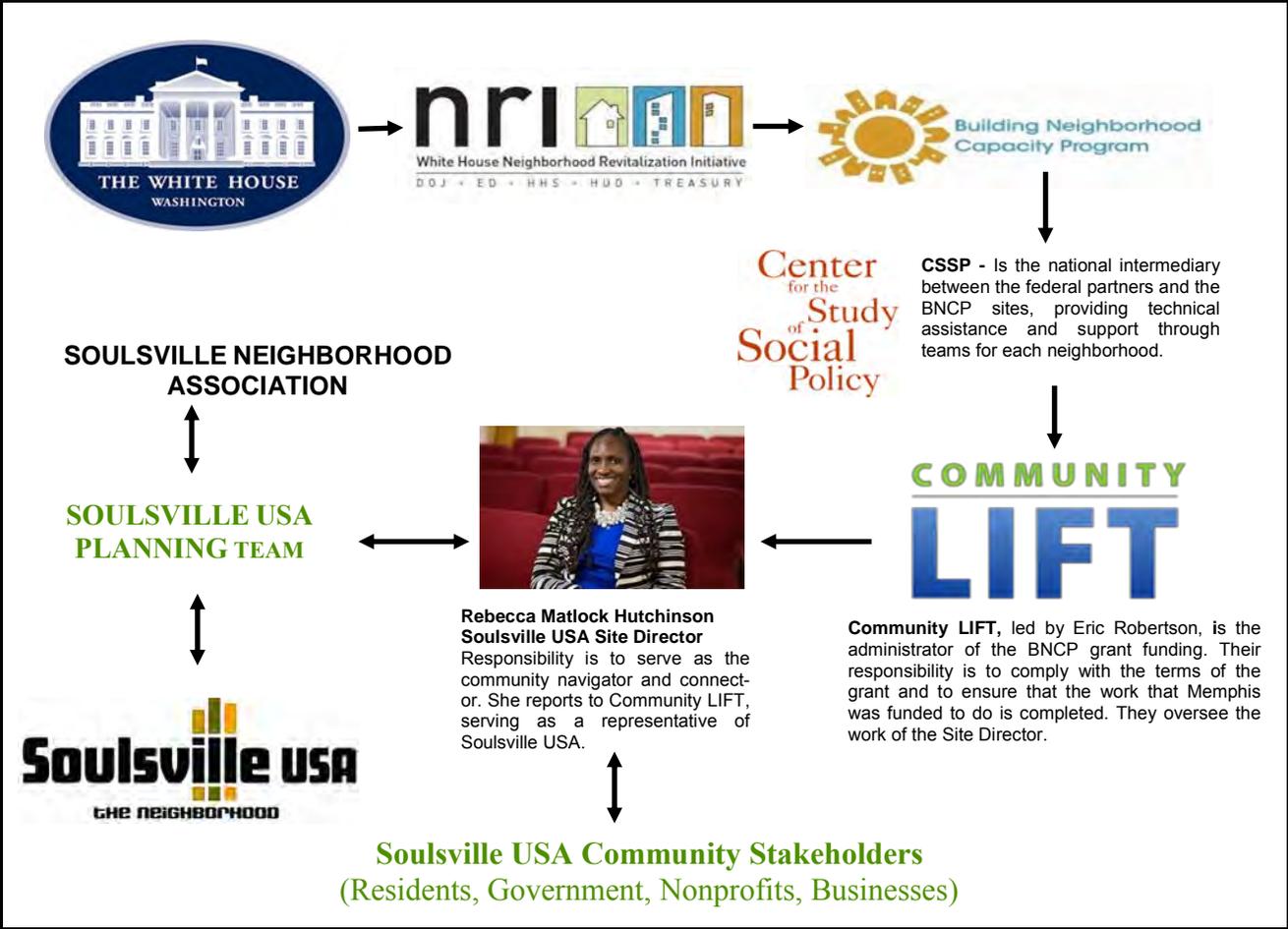
This initiative that has been undertaken by community stakeholders (residents, business owners, churches, nonprofits, etc.) over the last 18 months. The overall goal of the Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan is to make the neighborhood better through viable and sustainable community efforts. To accomplish this goal, the planning team and other stakeholders have been learning along this 18- month long journey about being intentional, strategic, proactive, and all-inclusive. The plan acts as an important catalyst in preserving not only the physical structures located in the neighborhood, but also the fabric and soul of Soulsville USA.

Herein exhibited are the tenets of neighborhood revitalization: collective work and responsibility, "the process", focused strategic goals, and a timeline to get things done. What you will see in this plan is that Soulsville USA executed planning objectives to gain public involvement; during the 18-month journey (process) community stakeholders assessed the existing neighborhood conditions. The community identified assets, opportunities and challenges in the neighborhood. Next, a vision for the future was developed. Now at the end of the planning process, the planning team is preparing to transition from planning to implementing projects.

In the implementation phase, residents and community stakeholders will build upon what was started in the planning phase. The implementation team will develop specific action steps, implement projects; measure progress, and adjust the plan as needed.



Figure 3 - Flowchart of Governing Structure during BNCP Grant





PART TWO
ALL ABOUT US



History of Soulsville USA

SOULSVILLE USA, the birthplace of American soul music, is situated in South Memphis. Incorporating four census tracts (46, 59, 115, and 116), it is bordered by Lauderdale Street (now Willie Mitchell) on the west, Bellevue Boulevard on the east, Crump Boulevard on the north, and South Parkway on the south. The neighborhood contains two significant cultural institutions: Stax Museum of American Soul Music (formerly Stax Records Company) and LeMoyné-Owen College (Memphis' only historically black college). It is in close proximity to other strong neighborhoods including Downtown, Midtown and Whitehaven.

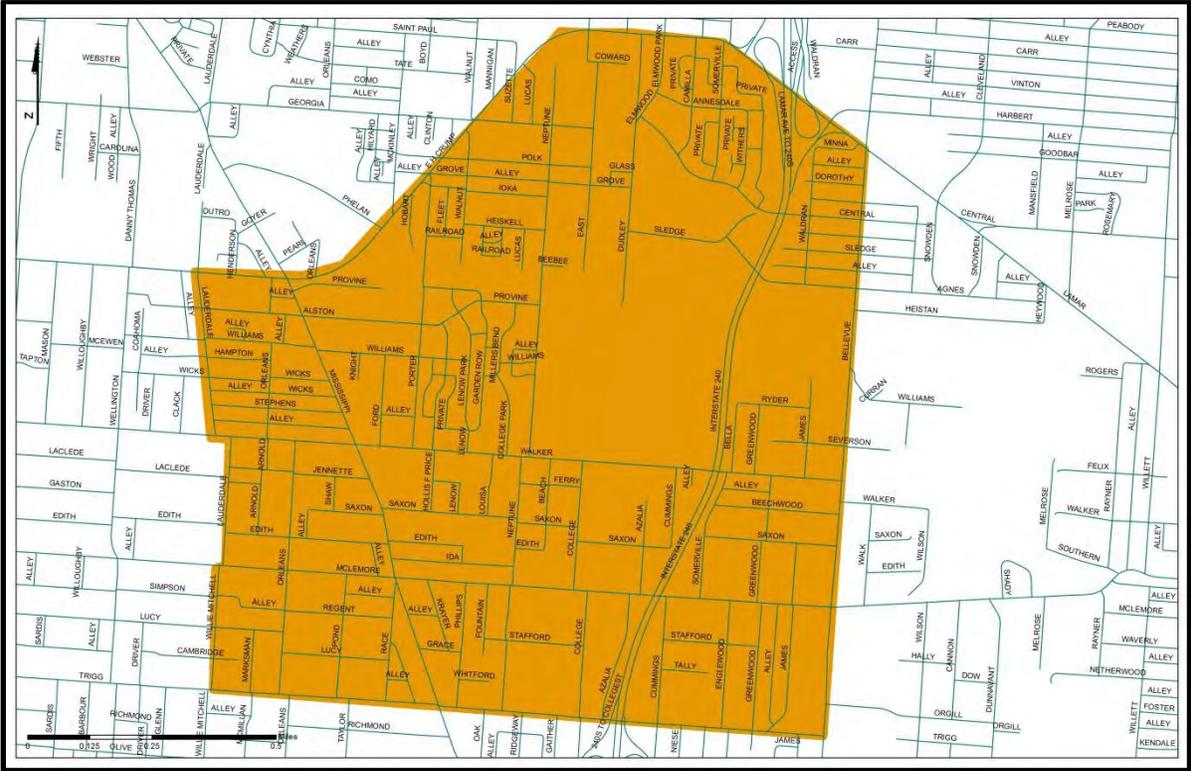


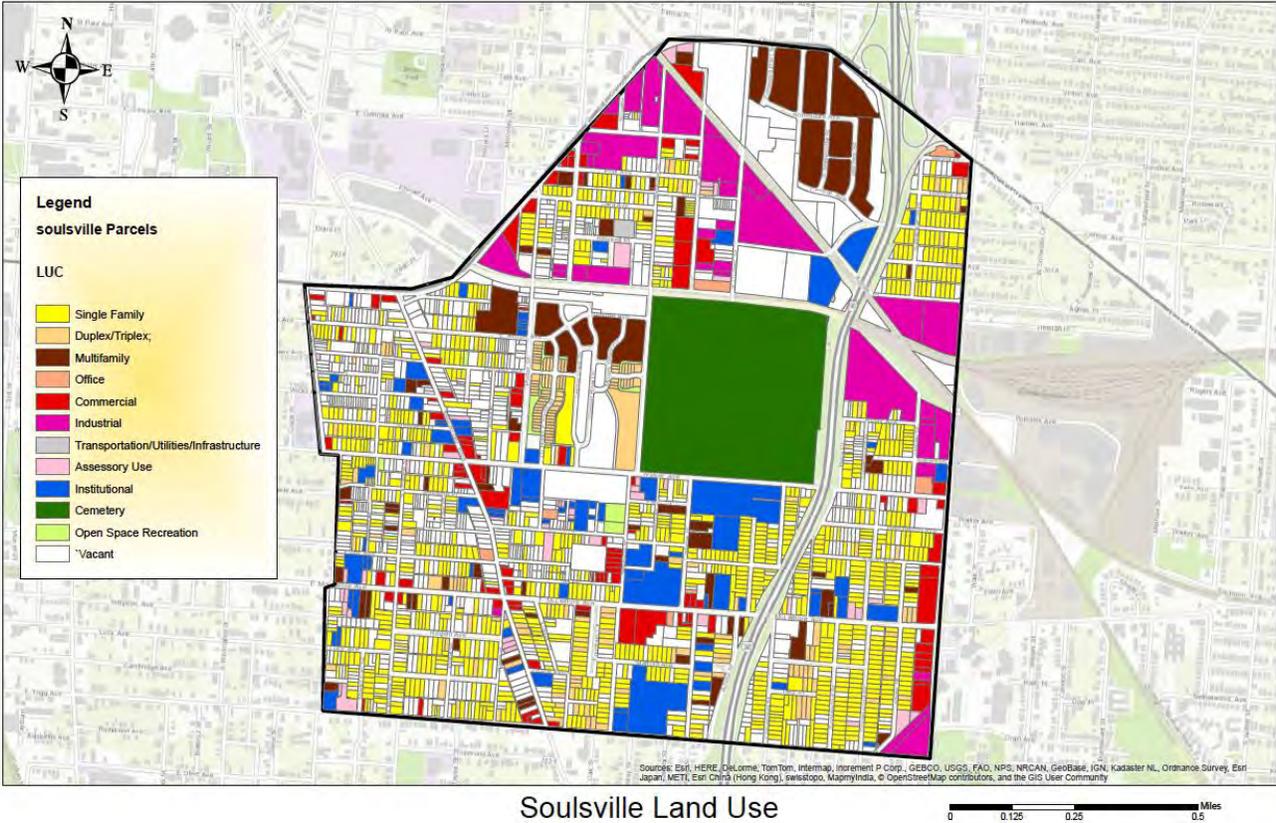
FIGURE 4: MAP - SOULSVILLE USA NEIGHBORHOOD



The name of the neighborhood derives from the marquee of the Stax Records Company, which displayed "SOULSVILLE USA" in response to Motown's "Hitsville USA" sign. Many of the artists who contributed to the success of Stax lived in the areas surrounding the studio or knew one another from church or school in the community. During its peak in the 1960s and early 1970s, Stax produced artists like Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, Isaac Hayes, and Booker T & the MGs. Stax was more than just a

studio -it was a place where diverse people with varied talents converged to create new sounds in American soul music.

By the time Stax opened in 1959, Soulsville USA had already begun to transition from a racially integrated and middle-class community to a poor and predominantly African American area. Many important public policy decisions contributed to these changes. In 1940, two public housing complexes - LeMoyne Gardens and Foote Homes-were built. Foote Homes (soon to be demolished) is just north of the northern neighborhood boundary and was within one-mile of the former LeMoyne Gardens. Following World War II, streetcar lines that contributed to early residential and business growth were removed. The interstate highway system which reached Memphis in 1958 opened new suburban development opportunities further east, drawing middle class residents away from Soulsville USA. School desegregation and events surrounding the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. expedited outward middle-class white flight.



Built in the early 1900s, Soulsville USA has maintained good urban form - storefronts built to the property line, narrow streets and dense development. New infrastructure such as bike lanes and curb cuts have increased connectivity to surrounding areas and improved pedestrian mobility and safety. The neighborhood is comprised of primarily single family housing with more than fifty percent (50%) occupied by renters.

Community Profile

Although just two miles from downtown Memphis, the neighborhood encompasses two of the city’s poorest zip codes, 38126 and 38106. The current total population is 8,348 and 92% percent is African American.

Soulsville USA Total Population & Race	Total	Percentage
	8,348	
White alone	475	5.7%
Black or African American alone	7,680	92.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	5	0.1%
Asian alone	18	0.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	-	-
Some other race alone	37	0.4%
Two or more races:	133	1.6%
Two races including some other race	18	0.2%
Two races excluding some other race, and three or more races	115	1.4%
Source: American Community Survey 2014		

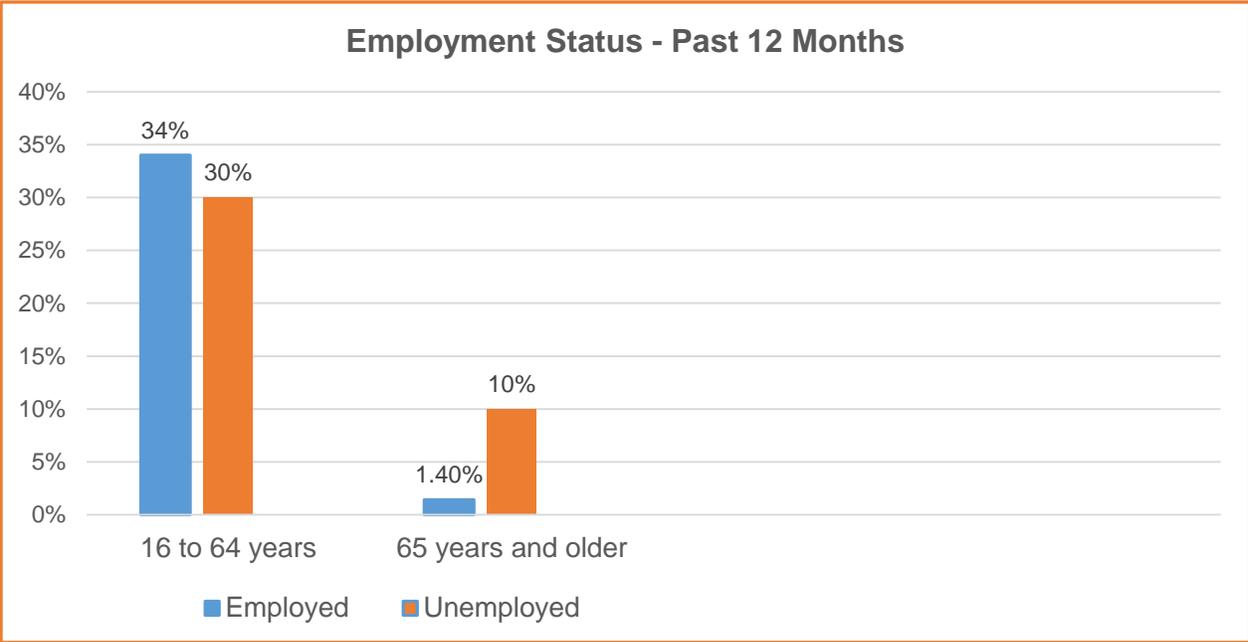
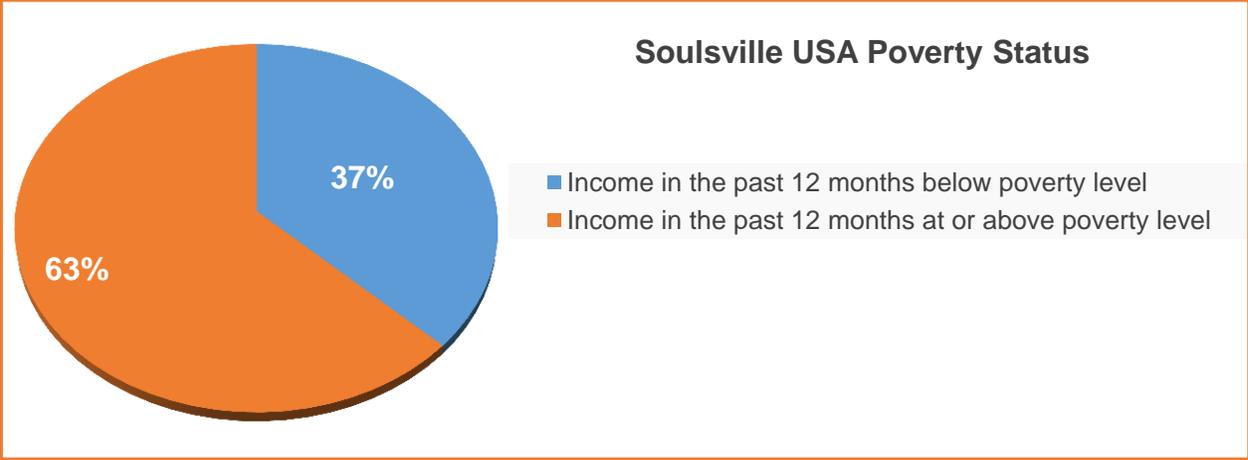
Graph 1

Soulsville USA Population By Age Group		
	Total	Percentage
Under 14 Years	1,900	22%
15 to 29 Years	1,886	23%
30 to 44 Years	1,214	15%
45 to 59 Years	2,022	24%
60 to 74 Years	891	11%
75 + Years	435	5%
Total Population	8,348	
Source: American Community Survey 2014		

Graph 2



As expected, the Soulsville area falls into the lower range when comparing median household income as a percentage of county median income in the year 2010. With a median household income of \$17,521, over fifty percent (50%) of residents live at or below the poverty level.

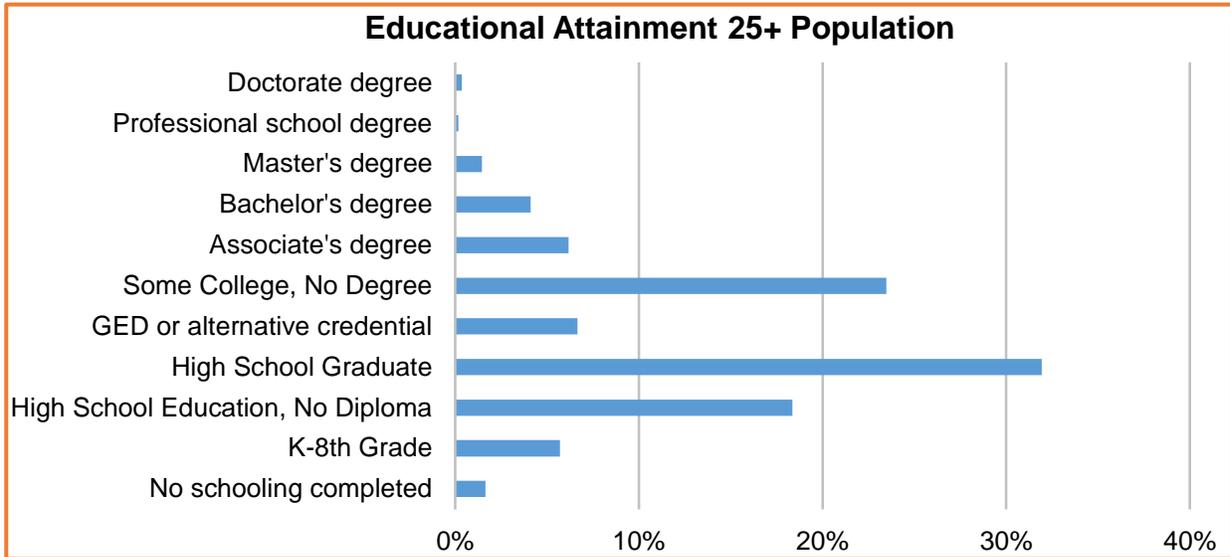


Graph 4

The employment status is consistent with similar neighborhoods that experience high levels of poverty.



Graph 5



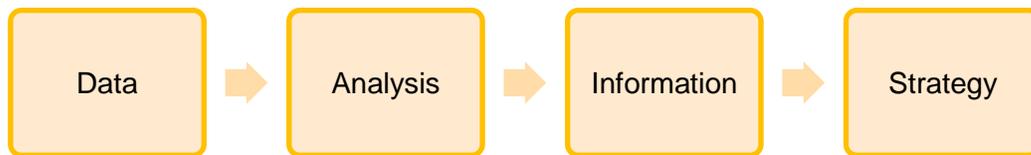
Despite the fact that Soulsville USA has experienced severe generational poverty and disinvestment, the neighborhood has a number of significant assets. If leveraged, invested in and nurtured, they can lead to tangible improvement. These assets include:

- Soulsville USA Neighborhood Association
- The Memphis Slim Collaboratory
- The South Memphis Farmers Market
- LeMoyne-Owen College
- The Stax Campus consisting of:
 - The Stax Museum of American Soul Music
 - Stax Music Academy
 - Soulsville Charter School
- College Park (Memphis' first Hope VI development)
- LeMoyne-Owen Community Development Corporation
- South Memphis Alliance, a nonprofit organization that focuses on social services.

Additionally, Soulsville USA is linked to the Memphis Heritage Trail, a City of Memphis cultural tourism initiative.

Data Driven Strategies

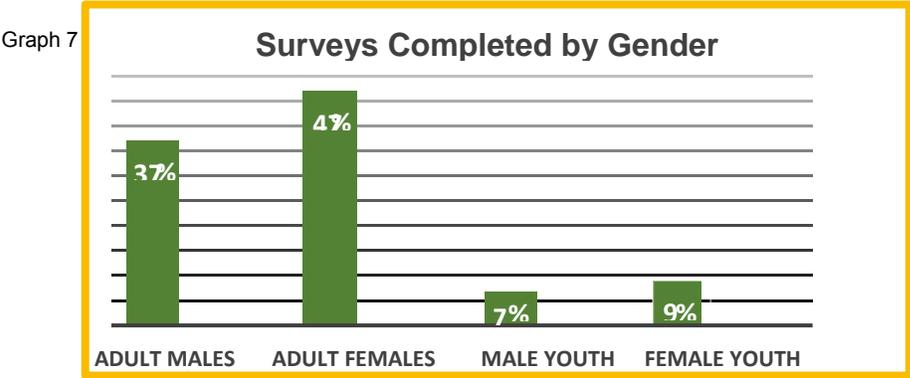
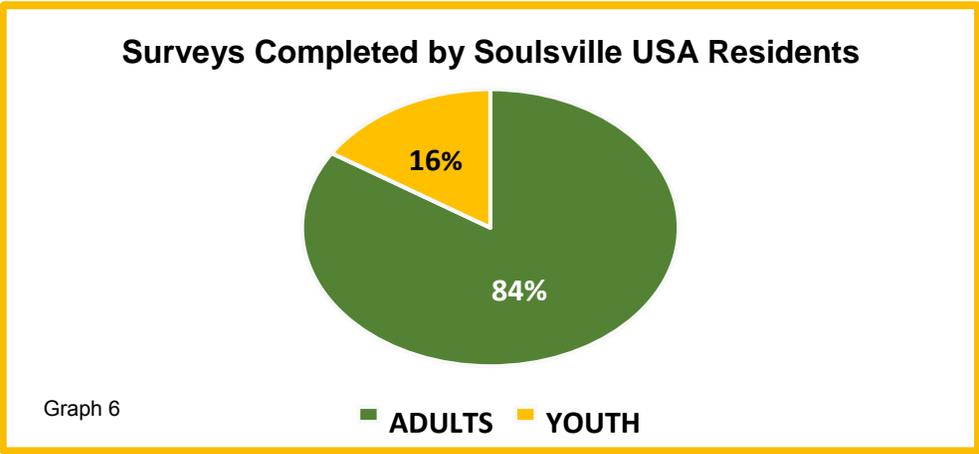
The Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan is a resident and data driven quality-of-life revitalization process. To this end, planning relied upon resident and community stakeholder knowledge. Additionally, the process was informed by secondary data from public domains, including U.S. Census data and Memphis Police Department. This type of comprehensive approach was critical in guiding the work and informing all aspects of the plan, including the selection of three primary focus areas: blight, crime prevention and public safety, and housing and economic development.



Many of the challenges faced by Soulsville USA were discussed in neighborhood team meetings, as well as, reported on surveys developed by residents. The challenges also were presented in respective discussion circles and focus groups. These sessions which were guided by local experts who probed deeper into how crime, blight, housing, and economic conditions are perceived by residents and stakeholders. As participants continued to discuss neighborhood challenges and use of data, their conversations and the lessons learned revealed the stories behind the data. For instance, some residents may desire to sit on their front porch at night, but “the lack of lighting and perceived safety” prevented them from doing so. While litter is quite visible on some streets, it is minimum in areas that have trash cans. As these stories continue to unfold, they can be used in combination with data to inform specific strategies. Residents and stakeholders have come to realize that their collective voices can create sustainable changes that can improve their quality of life and the neighborhood.

Soulsville USA Neighborhood Survey

In 2015 and 2016, three hundred seventy-eight (378) Soulsville USA residents completed surveys designed to capture demographic data, skillsets and general viewpoints regarding the neighborhood. The surveys used likert scales with rated responses, forced-choice questions and open-ended questions to collect the data. Twenty-seven surveys (27) were not included in this analysis due to insufficient data, resulting in a sample of three hundred fifty-one (351) or four percent (4%) of the 8,348 residents. The sample size indicates a 95% confidence level and a +/- 5% margin of error. There was widespread diversity in the ages of residents who completed surveys. The youngest was 10 years old. The oldest was 98 years old and had lived in Soulsville USA since 1939. For the purposes of analysis, youth are individuals from ages 10 to 19. Adults are individuals ages 20+. This analysis represents common data found on three different surveys administered over a two-year period by the Soulsville USA Site Director, neighborhood residents and university student volunteers.

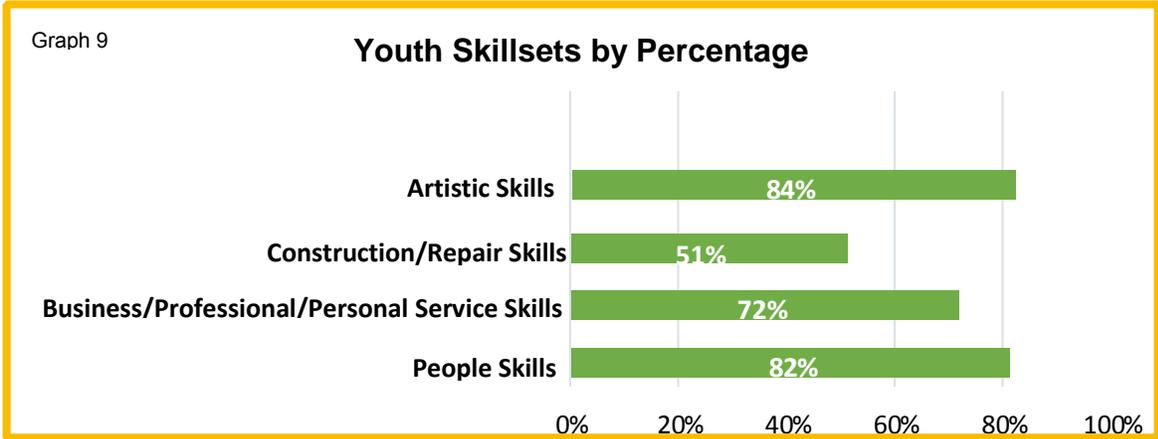
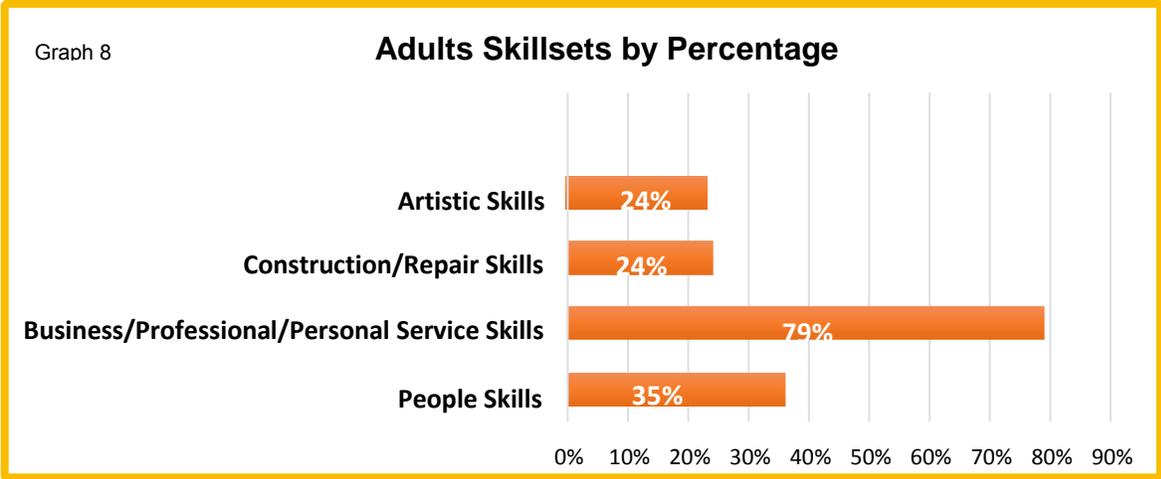


Skillsets

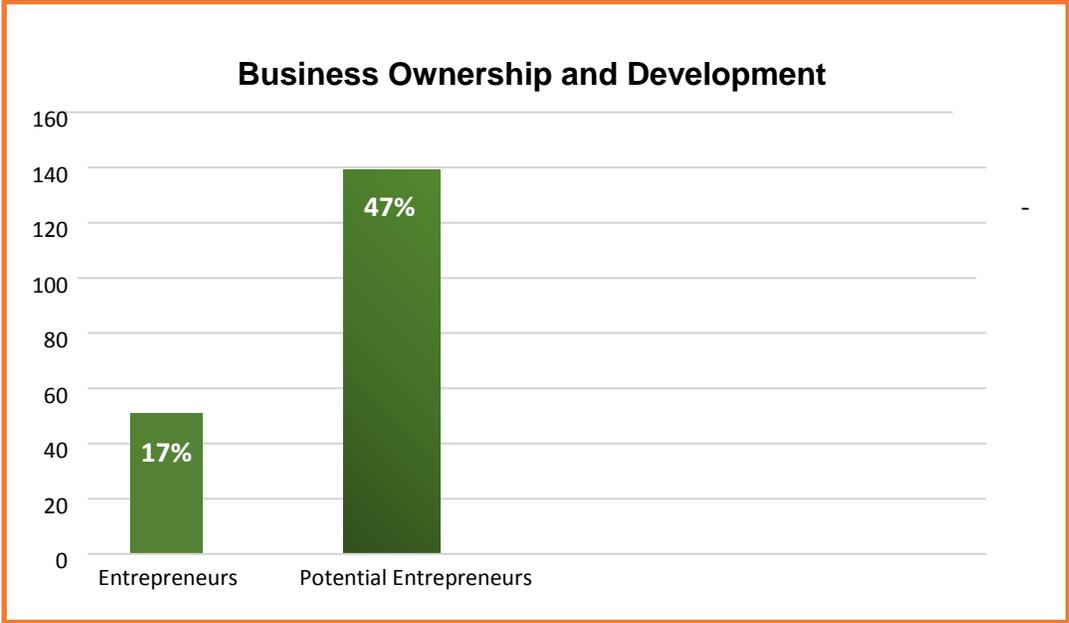
Residents were asked to identify their skills in four broad categories:

- artistic skills (visual arts, performing arts, quilting/sewing, crafts)
- construction/repair skills (appliance repair, painting/carpentry/plumbing, automobile repair, electrical/heating/cooling)
- business/professional/personal service skills (office/administrative work, health care, computer/technology, education/teaching, beauty care, cooking/catering, landscaping)
- people skills (caring for others, mentoring)

In many instances, they possessed skill sets that could address the three areas identified as neighborhood priorities: blight, public safety and housing/economic development. Further, the majority of residents identified multiple skillsets. Ultimately, resident skillsets can contribute to civic engagement, neighborhood improvements, and capacity building.



Economic Growth and Entrepreneurship

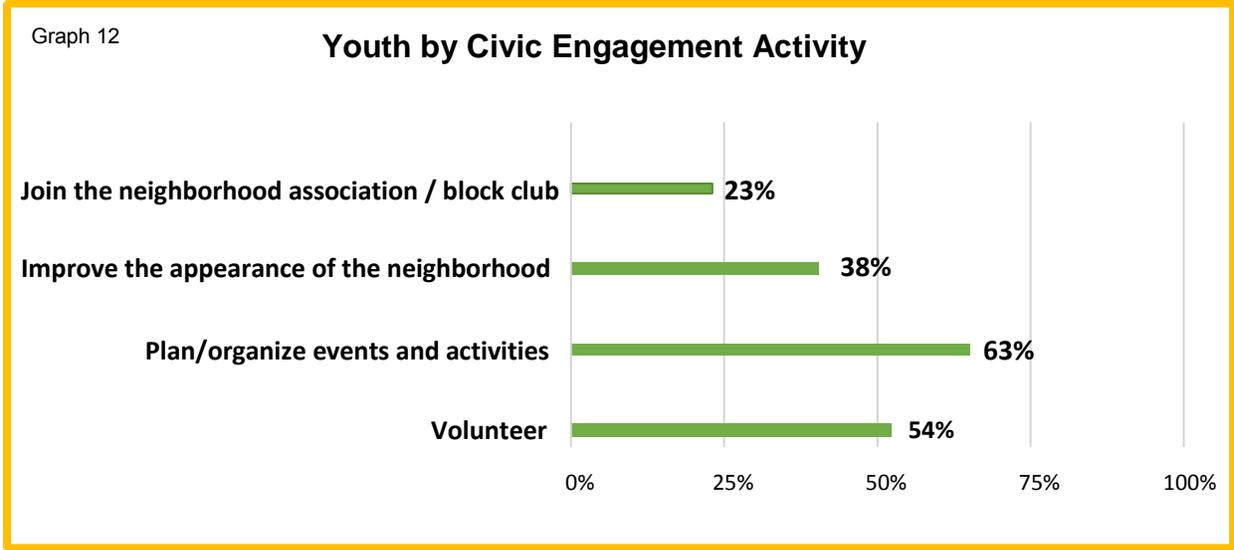
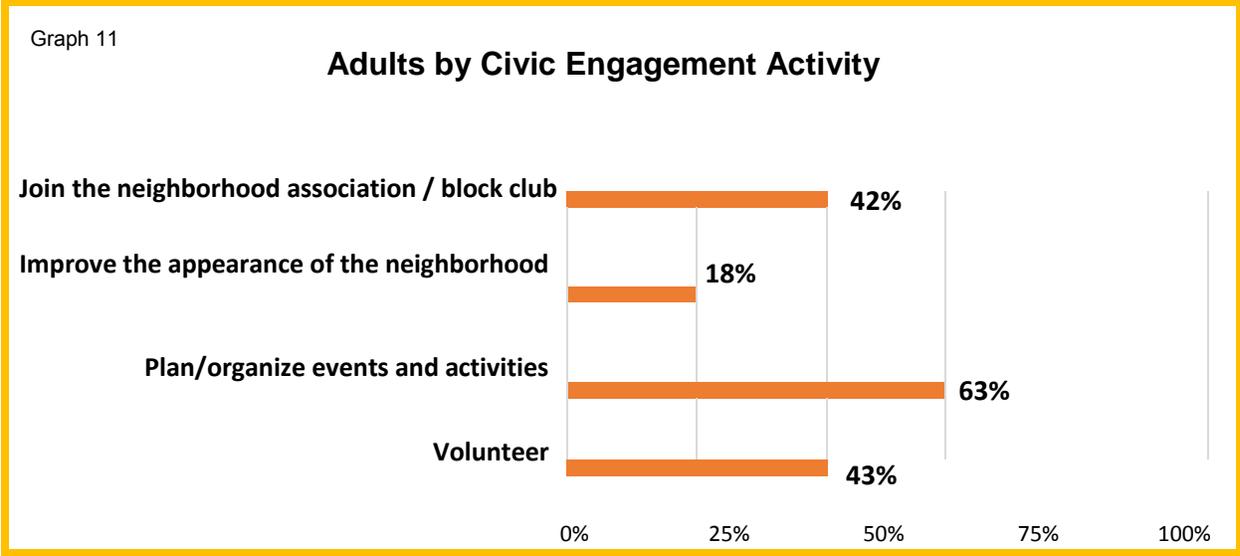


Graph 10

Seventeen percent (17%) of adult residents reported that they owned businesses. The majority were home-based offering personal and professional services. Forty-seven percent (47%) of adult residents had an interest in starting a business. The most common industries were food service, child care, personal services, and cleaning/maintenance services. These business interest directly correlated with the leading skillsets identified by adult residents. The most common challenges facing potential entrepreneurs were a lack of financial resources and access to information.

Civic Engagement

When residents were asked "how would you like to participate in Soulsville USA," several themes emerged: volunteerism, planning and organizing, visual improvements, and communal associations. As with skillsets, residents identified multiple activities for engagement.



Both adults and youth expressed greater interest in planning and organizing events and activities and serving as volunteers in the neighborhood. With more than fifty-percent (50%) of youth expressing an interest in these areas, there was a strong indication that they wanted to have an active role in shaping the future direction of Soulsville USA. Residents expressed an interest in participating in the neighborhood association and block clubs which are traditionally crucial elements for other engagement activities. These numbers were confirmed by attendance and participation during the planning process.

Select Resident Comments Regarding Soulsville USA
<i>I feel safe walking down the street.</i>
<i>I love living in Soulsville USA.</i>
<i>I am satisfied with the neighborhood but there could be more improvements.</i>
<i>People used to watch out for each other. We need to get back to that.</i>
<i>We need more community involvement.</i>
<i>Need to improve the housing.</i>
<i>I see more police – that’s good.</i>
<i>Need more programs to improve the neighborhood.</i>





PART THREE

ALL HANDS ON DECK: MOBILIZING



Neighborhood Participation and Community Involvement

“When people feel they have had a vital role in collaborative planning, they are more likely to have confidence in the process and voice support for the endeavor.”

- Urban Land Institute

Residents of Soulsville USA have a reputation of civic engagement. Many of them have been active members of the Soulsville USA Neighborhood Association for several years.

Soulsville USA is unique in many ways because community stakeholders know each other well, have established relationships, and have

collaborated on numerous events and other projects for the good of the neighborhood. There is an intimacy and a high level of mutual respect that one will find among the neighbors. Community building has always been at the essence of the neighborhood's existence. To some degree, the BNCP helped to bring about more cohesiveness among the community-at-large and to built upon the foundation laid in 2012. Thus, the idea of the planning process did not have to be sold to most of them.

Nonetheless, it was important to have some early successes and accomplishments. “Learn by doing” projects such as the ‘*I Love Soulsville*’ mural, rock garden, newsletter, and neighborhood watch group were needed and worked to maintain focus of the effort at-hand. Residents named the newsletter “Soulsville USA Neighborhood Pride” because they wanted a name that would help to build the self-esteem of the neighborhood and help promote neighborhood pride. The name chosen for the neighborhood watch group was “The Soulsville USA Safehaven Watch Group. The group’s organizers wanted a name that described the neighborhood as safe place to be; one where people could live without fear. Delivering tangible results in the short term by being outcome-oriented assisted in maintaining momentum.

Naturally, a few participants fell off during the 18-month long planning period.

However, the vast majority remained throughout the process.



Public Input

Guided by the planning committee, people living, working and visiting Soulsville USA had many opportunities to let their voices be heard. The collective voice about what they thought, experienced, and felt was captured through various means from retreats to community meetings to focus groups to neighborhood surveys to interviews by the local media.

The Challenges

With so much work to do, people can easily get distracted and off-track. It was a challenge for some to comprehend that we were in the "planning phase" of the project and not implementation. Therefore, efforts were intentional and designed to keep residents focused on the 18-month collaborative planning process.

It was also challenging at times to keep people motivated and engaged. Recruiting new participants was ongoing and equally challenging, but it was necessary to build momentum and support for the work.

Lastly, engaging youth posed a challenge. While 63% of the youth who participated in the survey expressed an interest in planning and organizing events and activities for the neighborhood, actualizing that was a different story. We realized that young people needed their own platform to express themselves. Youth involvement will be described later.

Process Driven

Each community work session was intentionally themed. Some sessions overlapped or took longer to go through. Again, emphasis was placed on the process and the fact that we could not move to Session Two until Session One was completed. Portions of Sessions Six and Seven were accomplished during the planning period. The remaining tasks will be completed at the beginning of the implementation phase. Session Eight will be addressed during the implementation phase.



Note, outlined below was Soulsville USA's process. Other neighborhoods may do these differently based on the needs and capacity of the community. Several of the sessions may overlap. It should also be noted that residents have moved into a "pre-implementation" mode, having already begun working on a few of the strategies. This will help transition residents into full implementation mode when the plan is activated in January 2017.

Session One - Defined the Problem (This is when participants developed problem statements.)

Session Two - Assembled Data (All the researched data was brought together to study and better understand the main causes on the problems. Some of the problem statements were amended based on new information learned.)

Session Three - Discussed Potential Strategies (Potential strategies were brainstormed for priority issues.)

Session Four - Selected Criteria (Here participants looked at ways other peer communities have used the selected strategies. Next, there was a brainstorming session for determining criteria for narrowing down strategies. Residents considered what was doable and practical.)

Session Five - Prioritized Strategies (Strategies were placed in a chart and graded 1-4 based on lowest cost, feasibility and effectiveness. Next, the scores were tallied and prioritized or selected. Three to four strategies were selected for each focus area and included one or more activities.

Session Six - Impact Projected, Feasibility, and Time (Metrics on how to determine success or impact will be outlined for each strategy. For example, **how many** lots should be cleaned up, what is the **percentage increase** in youth participation do residents desire, etc. Is the activity doable? Is it practical? Is it something that can be accomplished quickly, or will it take a while? Soulsville USA residents will set these outcome goals during the first quarter of the implementation phase.

Session Seven - Decided based on data (Strategies that have gone into the plan were based on data, research, discussions. Lead organizations/partners were recommended for each activity. Before implementation begins, an official commitment will be obtained from each agency to carry out the task.

Session Eight - Implement (Final strategies have been selected and partners identified. Next, residents will determine specific strategies and activities to implement during the first year, second year, and third year. These can be adjusted as needed.)



Results Driven

Being "results driven" was three-fold. First, we wanted to accomplish something at each meeting. Secondly, we wanted to aim for the low-hanging fruit by focusing on tasks that could be done at low-to-no cost in order to accomplish something together (i.e. "learn by doing" projects like the rock garden, clean-up programs, summer jobs for youth, establishing the neighborhood watch group). Thirdly, stakeholders went through the process of planning with a purpose. The focus areas and subsequent strategies offered a common interest for everyone to concentrate on.

Selecting Focus Areas

During the June 2015 Town Hall Meeting, the community began at the point where the Soulsville Neighborhood Association had left off a year or so earlier. The community has already conducted several surveys. The Town Hall Meeting and surveys yielded six pressing community issues. These issues were narrowed to three focus areas: Blight Elimination, Crime Prevention and Public Safety, and Housing and Economic Development.



Blight Elimination

Problem Statement

Blight in our Soulsville neighborhood is evident through abandoned, burned out, or boarded up property littered with trash and crime, negatively affecting residents and the larger community economically, socially, and emotionally.

Vision Statement

To be a community that is dedicated to finding solutions to blight in order to create a thriving, safe, economically-advantaged community for everyone, now and in the future.

NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION, PARKS	
STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNER
Restore/Reuse Vacant Lots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pocket Parks • Quarterly Clean Up Efforts 	Blight Authority Code Enforcement Environmental Court Memphis City Beautiful Clean Memphis Home Depot Lowes Shelby County Trustee's Office Lehman Robert's Company
Promote Community Pride/Increase Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt A Block Program • Yard of the Month • I Love Soulsville Yard Signs • SNA Meeting Yard Signs • Newsletter • Social Media 	SNA LeMoyne-Owen College CDC Stax City of Memphis, Housing and Community Development South Memphis Shalom Zone
Promote Advocacy for Chandler Park	City of Memphis, Parks and Neighborhoods Division SNA Blight Team Nike, Inc. Area Schools Clean Memphis Memphis City Beautiful Parks Advocacy Group (Innovate Memphis) Lehman Roberts Company



Crime Prevention and Public Safety

Problem Statement

Crime in our community is a direct result of a lack of positive exposure at an early age to learning opportunities that fosters accountability, moral values, and a sustainable support system.

Vision Statement

To be a community that targets criminal activities through training, education, and full collaboration with police, city officials, and neighborhood partners so that our community becomes a place where crime is not an option.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH - CRIME PREVENTION	
STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNER
Create a Sense of "A Safe Place" in Soulsville USA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light-Up Soulsville USA 	Memphis Light Gas and Water Blight Authority Neighborhood Businesses Neighborhood Churches
Prevent Crime in Neighborhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen Neighborhood Watch Group* 	Memphis Police Department
Promote Youth Well-being; Prevent Youth Violence and Crime <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish/expand youth programs/activities. 	Memphis Park and Neighborhood Division Memphis Grizzlies Memphis Red Birds Knowledge Quest RISE Foundation Boys & Girls Club Technical Training Center Memphis Black Arts Alliance South Memphis Shalom Zone
Address Substance Abuse as a Cause for Crime <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek partnership with existing drug and alcohol counseling agency Establish and promote counseling classes / groups across the neighborhood 	Harbor House Serenity House



Housing and Economic Development

Problem Statement

There are insufficient opportunities for Soulsville residents to generate income in Soulsville USA.

Vision Statement

Soulsville USA is a community where businesses and entrepreneurs flourish and create income generating opportunities for residents in the community.

TOURISM, HOUSING, AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES	
STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNER
Ensure Job Training Opportunities	YWCA, Sarah Brown Branch Workforce Investment Network Memphis Shelby County Office of Reentry Knowledge Quest, Inc. Boys & Girls Club Technical Training Center Advance Memphis Bioworks, Inc. Hope Works, Inc. Memphis Black Arts Alliance Man of the House Male Mentoring program
Develop Cultural Tourism Industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish open air market Host resident-guided tours of neighborhood Sell neighborhood-themed merchandise Develop Marketing Campaign/Neighborhood Branding 	Soulsville Foundation Tour of Possibilities Heritage Tours Memphis City Council Memphis Heritage Trail - City of Memphis, HCD Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau Memphis Area Association of Governments
Create Community Investment Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase vacant buildings/housing Restore properties for capital generating Establish a multi-functional resource center 	Community Foundation of Greater Memphis River City Capital PRI Investments
Address Housing Concerns of Elderly Populations and all residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect residents home repair/weatherization programs. Assist elderly with property tax abatement Develop information outlets for residents with delinquent property taxes. 	Tennessee Housing Development Agency Memphis Community Services City of Memphis, Div. Housing and Community Development Shelby County Trustee's Office Shelby County Assessor's Office Tax Freeze and Tax Abatement Programs City of Memphis, Treasury Department



Community Engagement



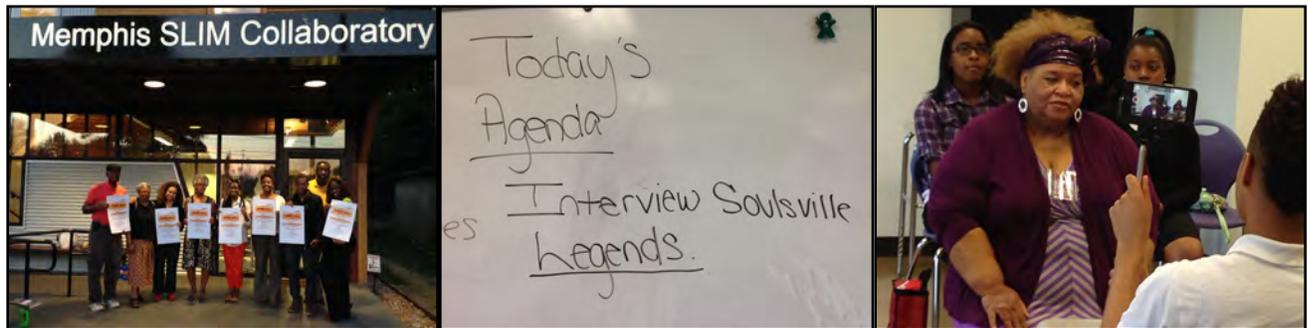
Top Left – June 2015 Town Hall Meeting. **Top Middle:** Youth Resident presenting her vision board.
Top Right - Work Session participants voting on bus shelters.

Community engagement was a part of the process and was performed by each of the teams. Soulsville USA residents and other community stakeholders took part in more than fifty community engagement opportunities.

To achieve a sense of community, it is vitally important to involve everyone in the planning process. The comprehensive nature of revitalization dictates the need to create partnerships with a variety of stakeholders from the community. Early on, as well as, throughout the process, the Soulsville USA planning committee led by site director Rebecca Matlock Hutchinson, sought organizations, people, schools, governmental departments, and businesses with whom to develop partnerships and collaborations.

Some of the community engagement activities included: leadership development training, conferences, tours, meetings, community fairs and festivals, neighborhood canvassing/door-to-door surveying, community organizing events, social media announcements, newsletter, interviews, creative design lab, charrettes, interactions with foundations, local government, service learning projects, and formation and expansion of partnerships.

Activities and Events



- *Semi-Annual Town Hall Meetings*
- *Teams Formed: Blight, Crime Prevention/Public Safety, Housing and Economic Development*
- *Reimagining Slim's Backyard*
- *I Love Soulsville Mural Installed*
- *Canvassing the Neighborhood: Door to Door Surveys*
- *Soulsville USA Neighborhood Festival*
- *Community Conversations - Collaboration with Ballet Memphis and Stax*
- *Christmas Dinner Celebration*
- *Planning Committee Retreat*
- *MLK Day of Service Clean-Up*
- *McLemore Corridor Planning*
- *Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) with resident participation from Everlena Yarbrough, Henry Ford, Lynn Jackson, and Daniel Watson*
- *Soulsville USA Neighborhood Pride Newsletter Launched*
- *Community Meeting - Rev. DeAndre Brown, Lifeline to Success and Frayser Blight Control, Speaker*
- *Community Design Charrette for the Mac Redevelopment Project*
- *High Ground News 'On the Ground' 90-day program with embedded journalist in Soulsville USA*
Contributing Organizations: Memphis and Shelby County Office of Re-Entry, South Memphis Shalom Zone, South Memphis Alliance, Soulsville USA Neighborhood Association, YWCA, Community LIFT, and Jim & Samella's Restaurant. Major Supporters: Metropolitan Baptist Church, Stax, LeMoyne-Owen College CDC, Centenary United Methodist Church,
High Ground News: What Can Smart Neighborhoods Learn From Soulsville Panel Discussion
High Ground Neighborhood Tour
- *Joy Jinks Workshop. Sponsors: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and Arts Memphis*
- *Community Work Sessions Partners: Livable Memphis, Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, Where-to-Give Mid-South Program, City of Memphis Housing and Community Development*
- *Neighborhoods USA National Conference and Neighborhood Tour. Sponsors: Self+Tucker Architects, Tour of Possibilities, and Community Advisors*
- *A Taste of Memphis at Tiger Lane*
- *Youth Summer Neighborhood Clean-Up Project, Partners: Memphis City Beautiful, LeMoyne-Owen College Community Development Corporation Clean Memphis, Shelby County Trustee Office, SNA*
- *Rock Garden. Partner: Memphis City Beautiful and Urban Earth Nursery, LeMoyne-Owen College*
- *Creative Place-making for McLemore Corridor and Re-imagining Slim Back Yard*

Select Event Flyers

SOULSVILLE USA FESTIVAL
OCT. 17, 2015 | 10AM-6PM
at McLemore & College

FAMILY FRIENDLY & KIDS' ACTIVITIES!
40+ CRAFT & FOOD VENDORS!

FEATURING...
"PARADES OF MEMPHIS"
"JUKING DANCERS"
"SKATE JAM OLDBERS"
"ROLLED UP JAZZ CREW"
"DRAMA QUEEN"
CHILDREN PERFORMERS
CHILDREN'S ROCK WALL
BOUNCE HOUSE
KIDS BIKE COURSE
FREE BIKE GIVEAWAY
FACE PAINTING
CARICATURE ARTIST
CORN DOGS, COTTON CANDY & MORE!

SPONSORED BY:

TEAM UP TO CLEAN UP

It's back to school time and Shelby County Schools need our help to cleanup around neighborhood elementary schools.

• August 20: 8:30am - 11:30am
Cummings Elementary (Soulsville, USA)

ALL TOOLS BAGS AND GLOVES WILL BE PROVIDED.
SCHOOL LOCATIONS WILL BE ASSIGNED BASED UPON COVERAGE NEEDS.
ALL CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT.

Soulsville usa

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH INFORMATIONAL MEETING
FOR SOULSVILLE, USA RESIDENTS

Your Neighborhood Watch Liaison and the Memphis City Police Department invite you to a Neighborhood Watch meeting. Get the latest information about crime in our neighborhood, meet our Community Police Officer, and learn about crime prevention...

WHEN: Monday, November 23, 2015
TIME: 5:00 p.m.
WHERE: Metropolitan Baptist Church
767 Walker Avenue
HOST: SOULSVILLE SAFE HAVEN WATCH GROUP
SAFEHAVEN@YAHOO.COM

What is Neighborhood Watch?
Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program which enlists the active participation of residents in cooperation with the local police to prevent and reduce crime in Memphis City's neighborhoods.
Neighborhood Watch is residents not only knowing each other, but taking the time to care about each other and work together in a program of mutual aid.
Neighborhood Watch is about crime prevention, education and the implementation of important home and personal security strategies.

Soulsville usa

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Slim's Backyard Community Clean-up

Who: MEMPHIS SLIM + YOU

What: Memphis Slim House Backyard Community Clean-up

When: Saturday, May 7th
9 am-12 pm

Where: Memphis Slim House
1300 College St. Across the street from the Slim Museum parking lot at McLemore Ave near College St.

More Info: www.memphis-slim.com

11 Soulsville usa
11th (Neighborhood)

Monday, January 11th @ 5:30 pm
@ Star Music Academy, multi-purpose room
910 McLemore Ave

January Community Design Charette

Calling all visual artists, musicians, food vendors, and community members! We request your presence at the Soulsville Community Design Charette to help reimagine the vacant space at 945/949 McLemore.

Have a question or need more info? Call Kalle, 901-417-4109. American Sign Language Interpreter will be available on site.

A Newsletter for the Soulsville Community
December 2015

SoulsvillePride News

Great People
Great Community
Great Future

soulsvillepridenews@gmail.com

The Marjorie Q. Swann Oral History Project

A Conversation with Joy Jinks

Saturday, May 29th, 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. at the LeMoyn-Owen College Alma C. Hansen Student Center

Joy Jinks, who will be the keynote speaker at Friday's breakfast for the NUSA conference, hosted by the City of Memphis, will be conducting a full workshop in Soulsville USA from 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

DAY OF SERVICE

January 18, 2016
Time: 8:00 - 11:00am

UNITE. SERVICE A DIALOGUE BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Join Clean Memphis and The LeMoyn-Owen College in a day of service to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Visit www.CleanMemphis.org/Events to Register!

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"
— Martin Luther King Jr.

Tuesday, June 14th
5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Metropolitan Baptist Church
767 Walker Avenue

Soulsville USA THE NEIGHBORHOOD Community Work Session

Be a part of your Neighborhood Planning Process

Soulsville, USA residents: Working together to build a Stronger, Safer, and welcoming Community

Become a decision maker in your neighborhood. Join the residents of Soulsville, USA as we begin to develop our 3 year neighborhood plan.

Free food - 5:30 p.m. - 5:55 p.m.
Work Session - 6:00 p.m.

METROPOLITAN BAPTIST CHURCH
13 HOLY NIGHT!

Sat., December 6, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Stax Museum of American Soul Music

SOULSVILLE RESIDENTS: YOU ARE INVITED!

SOULSVILLE STORYTELLING PROJECT COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Panel discussion with leaders from nonprofit service providers in Soulsville:

- MARLENE POSTER, Executive Director, Knowledge Quest
- JAPP NOLLESEN, Executive Director, Blue Pathways
- RONALDO WILSON, Executive Director, Stax Memphis, Alabama
- ANQUEEN WILLIAMS, Executive Director, YWCA of Greater Memphis

SEPTEMBER 9, 2015
6:00 - 8:00 P.M.
STAX MUSEUM OF AMERICAN SOUL MUSIC

Panelists will share information about what each organization does, how to get involved, and answer any questions you have. Meet service providers from organizations in Soulsville and learn how you can take advantage of resources right here in the neighborhood! Light refreshments will be served.

Select Resident Photos



Top Left – June 2015 Town Hall Meeting. **Top Right** – Residents doing surveys on the “Mobile Porch”, a local community tool often used for community engagement. **Middle Left** – Soulsville USA Planning Team meeting. **Middle Right** – Soulsville USA Planning Team meeting. **Bottom Right** – Residents working sign-in desk. **Bottom Left** – Resident Lori Spicer Robertson presenting.



Top Left - Rebecca Matlock Hutchinson being interviewed by local TV News. **Center Left** - Residents, Robertson Family, Everlena Yarborough, and Carolyn Cleveland pose for photo. **Center Right** - Residents Carolyn Cleveland and Jewell Pettigrew. **Bottom Right** - Residents and volunteers work on beautification project.

Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

Left: SUSA Neighborhood Festival dance performance. **Center:** SUSA vs. Riverview Kansas sport competition. **Right:** SUAS community meeting.

More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

As stated, during the earlier phase in the BNCP process, the three teams formed around the critical focus areas: (1) Blight, (2) Crime Prevention and Public Safety, and (3) Housing & Economic Development, met regularly for several months. Team members learned more about their specific focus areas, held engaging discussions, and gathered more information about their community as it related to these areas.

Team leaders facilitated various activities, such as the Blight Team, which conducted windshield surveys, documenting over 100 blighted properties and vacant lots; or the Crime Prevention and Public Safety Team which formed the neighborhood's first Neighborhood Watch Group; and the Housing & Economic Development Team, which considered data learned from the neighborhood survey to help generate ideas to address joblessness, business development, and housing issues that plague Soulsville USA. These activities served to help residents and stakeholders to define what each of the three critical areas look like in Soulsville USA.

The lessons learned during this period were used to help inform their decisions regarding realistic strategies.

Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

In the spring of 2016, residents and stakeholders developed a process to begin identifying strategies to address the critical issues they had identified months earlier. They met once a month from April – July 2016 in Community Work Sessions. These sessions were used to help provide participants an opportunity to employ the lessons learned during the initial BNCP phase to inform their discussions and decisions.

Residents used a simple model which provided specific purposes or tasks for each community work session. Every community work session was dedicated to a specific task. The progress was progressive as each task-based session subsequently built on the work of the previous meeting.

Here are the five community work sessions and their described tasks.

Session 1: Define the problem- Participants developed clear definitions of what each of the three critical focus areas look like in Soulsville USA. They developed problem statements and a mission statement to help address the issue

Session 2: Assemble Data - Here, participants reviewed Soulsville USA statistics on crime, housing, and blight. These data helped provide an even better understanding regarding the main causes of each issue. Using this data, residents retooled their problem statements, making them more germane to the root causes.

Session 3: Create Potential Interventions – In this session, using their data, residents brain stormed potential strategies for their priority issue. Strategies from other neighborhoods in Memphis, as well as other cities, were introduced to help residents learn about what was working elsewhere and how strategies were implemented.

During this session, residents invited a special guest to share the story of his nonprofit organization located in the Frayser community of Memphis, Tennessee. Lifeline to Success, a program targeting ex-offenders reentering society, seeks to address the issues plaguing this target population, in particular, the difficulty they experience in securing employment.



Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

Left: Resident completing survey. **Center:** Neighborhood clean-up initiative. **Right:** Children drumming at a community event.

D'Andre Brown, the executive director of Lifeline to Success, spoke to the residents about the program's purpose to help provide an employment opportunity to ex-offenders. The program's participants, in its Blight Patrol program, are paid to help control blight in their community, and are taught job readiness and life skills, while providing a vital service to the Frayser community— blight remediation.

This particular program was highlighted, because it addresses all three of the critical areas: Blight, through its Blight Patrol and clean up initiative; Housing & Economic Development, through its job readiness component; and Crime Prevention and Public Safety, oftentimes, remedied when an individual is employed.

Session 4: Select the criteria – At this point, participants decided on what criteria would be used to help determine the prioritized strategies. Residents considered the possible costs and time it would require to implement strategies. With this in mind, they chose the following criteria to help select strategies:

1. Short term and no to low cost. These would give immediate victories, which would help sustain interest and keep morale up.
2. Moderate time (approximately 6 – 8 months). Require more time, but are doable and practical.
3. Long term/high cost strategies. Require the 3 years of the strategic plan

Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

Session 5: Prioritized Strategies – After reviewing the strategies discussed during the brainstorming session and employing the selection criteria, residents and stakeholders narrowed them down. The prioritized strategies to be used to address problems identified in each of the three critical areas, were chosen. Their informed decisions were successfully made using qualitative and quantitative data.

Learn While Doing Project

Implemented Strategies - The Stories Behind the Data

SoulsvilleUSA Summer Youth Clean Up Program

For three hours a day, three days a week, 6 weeks from June 13 – July 20th, 2016, 12 Soulsville USA youth between the ages of 14 and 17, were given a unique opportunity to earn money for school by cleaning up their neighborhood, while learning the value of community.

This initiative, referred to as the Soulsville USA Summer Youth Clean Up Program, was born out of the community work sessions. The need for youth activities, particularly jobs, in Soulsville USA was a concern voiced by several residents on the neighborhood survey. The community work session participants also discussed the importance of focusing on youth development as an early crime prevention tactic. Additionally, the neighborhood survey revealed that a large percentage of residents expressed an interest in having frequent community clean up efforts. With this in mind, Blight, Crime Prevention and Public Safety, and Housing & Economic Development teams collaborated to pilot a summer job program for the neighborhood youth.

They engaged several community partners: Memphis City Beautiful, Clean Memphis, the LeMoyne-Owen College Community Development Corporation (CDC), Soulsville Neighborhood Association, and the Shelby County Trustee Office. Each partner contributed to the program based on their capacity and expertise. Memphis City Beautiful loaned the tools needed to perform the work: rakes, shovels, gloves, garbage



Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

bags, among other equipment. Clean Memphis staff conducted the orientation during week one. Participants were given an overview of the Soulsville USA neighborhood's history, had discussions surrounding exactly what "blight" is, and its impact on a community. Representatives from the Shelby County Trustee Office provided direction on what areas should be addressed, and the LeMoyne-Owen College CDC loaned their intern to serve as supervisor. Finally, one of residents from the Soulsville Neighborhood Association, managed the program, providing invaluable oversight, helping to guide it.

Three youth mentors also worked with the young people periodically throughout the summer. Two of the mentors were a young couple from the Soulsville USA community and the third was a graduate student from the University of Memphis. They offered words of encouragement and advise.

The youth not only learned the importance of caring for and maintaining their community, but they also heard from speakers. A representative from Hope Credit Union lead a session with the youth, teaching them financial management and how to save that first pay check. He also left them with some very powerful words of inspiration and encouragement specifically targeting young people.

On another occasion, one of the youth mentors lead the students in a thought provoking discussion focusing on how the young people feel about their community. The participants were encouraged to speak freely and honestly about their feelings. While some of youth were initially quiet and timid, the group leader's sensitive and consistent encouragement, helped those young people to gradually open up and share their thoughts.

As the summer progressed, the young people became more and more outgoing. They began to express an increased interest in the community and playing more of an active role. The young people also voiced a desire for more youth activities in Soulsville USA. With this in mind, the students felt a need to continue participating in the life of their neighborhood. To this end, the youth decided to organize themselves into a formal group. They gave themselves the name: IAM SUSUA – I Am Soulsville USA.



Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

As I AM SUSA, the youth wanted to plan an event. They decided to host a Soulsville USA Back-to-School Basketball tournament, a first for the community. With the help and guidance of their mentors, the young people eagerly began planning their first major event.

They chose a date in August for the event, which was later changed to September 9, 2016, as their planning really began to take shape. The amount of planning demonstrated to I Am SUSA that adequate time is needed when developing a project. Some of youth continued to meet to plan the event although the clean up program had officially ended.

As they met, the youth of I Am SUSA became event planners. Throughout the planning process, they learned a few of the logistics involved in creating an event. I Am SUSA located a venue for their basketball tournament. They became fund raisers; understanding that events require financial resources. They learned about marketing, getting the word out; partnering, understanding that it requires the help of many more. They enlisted the assistance of the basketball coach at LeMoyne-Owen College, Soulsville USA's historically black college, who helped provide guidance in developing the tournament.

Their event was named "Hopes and Hoops." About 75 young people of the community and the surround area of Soulsville USA, attended the event. "Hopes and Hoops" turned into a panel discussion of young adults addressing current issues relevant to young people. Following the discussion, was the basketball tournament. The first event of I Am SUSA was a great success.

The Soulsville USA Summer Youth Clean Up Program ended with a "graduation" for the young people. All the partners, residents, and other guests gathered with the youth to culminate their 6-week long. Each youth received a certificate signed by the mayor of Memphis and a goodie bag filled with gifts.

The students enjoyed themselves and learned a great deal during the 6-week program that they asked if it will be offered again next summer.



Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies**Light Up Soulsville USA**

Light Up Soulsville USA is another strategy informed by qualitative data. This strategy is based on the personal experience of residents, many of whom live near some of the numerous dark vacant lots in the community. A resident learned that if a homeowner has a utility pole in their yard, the local utility company, Memphis, Light, Gas and Water (MLGW), would install a light on the pole for a very nominal fee, with a monthly cost of less than \$10.00 per month added to the homeowner's utility bill.

She had MLGW install a light on the utility pole in her back yard. The light was so bright that it not only lit up her backyard, but the yards of her two next doors neighbors, as well as the vacant lot adjacent to her property. Her neighbors, who are senior citizens, shared with her how happy they were about the light. Because it had been so dark outside, they could not sit on their porch at night. Now, with the bright light illuminating their yard, her neighbors have no fear of sitting on their front porches.

Using this as their foundation, the Crime Prevention and Public Safety Team are developing the "Light Up Soulsville" strategy.

Community Investment Fund

As businesses closed and people moved out, with no replacements, buildings became vacant and blighted properties. The Soulsville USA community is inundated with vacant properties. Many residents who participated in the neighborhood survey suggested that these buildings be converted into "day-time get-away" centers for senior citizens or safe places for youth to hang out. Another use would be to create a permanent home for the Soulsville Neighborhood Association which currently holds its monthly meetings at a neighborhood church.



Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies

The Housing & Community Development Team viewed these vacant unoccupied buildings as opportunities. Team members suggested that residents pull their collective resources, purchase one property, and renovate it themselves. To help make this happen, residents are exploring the possibility of creating a Community Investment Fund. The Prioritized Strategies show the potential partners.

Cultural Tourism Industry

Stax Museum of American Soul Music, a major stakeholder in the Soulsville USA community, helps to ensure the musical legacy of the Stax Recording Studio, as well as of the neighborhood, is preserved. While music is a major part of the Soulsville USA Community, the neighborhood is rich in history that includes the civil rights movement, powerful business leaders who shaped, not only Soulsville USA, but the Memphis community, as well as faith leaders, educators, and medical physicians. All of these are a small part of the historical legacy which helps to define the Soulsville USA neighborhood.

According to the Soulsville Foundation, approximately 50,000 people visited the Stax Museum in 2014. Because there are no amenities, like restaurants and shops surrounding the immediate area of the museum, tourists leave the community after visiting the museum. In light of this, as well as wanting to build the historical component of the neighborhood, the Housing & Economic Development Team decided that a Cultural Tourism Industry should be created.

Suggestions such as neighborhood tours and an open air market featuring resident vendors, were presented as ways of leveraging the success of Stax and capturing some of the tourists visiting the museum.

The concept of the open air market was born out of the results of the neighborhood survey. The survey revealed many residents who are artisans. They make crafts, sew, build furniture, and are artists. Many work out of their homes and sell their crafts. The open air market would provide a community venue for these vendors to showcase



Part Three Addendum (A) - More About Identifying the Prioritized Strategies



Left: Children and volunteer preparing raised-beds for the Knowledge Quest Garden. **Middle:** SUSA children during neighborhood cleaning event. **Right:** Community enjoying live band during SUSA Neighborhood Festival.

their products. It would also give tourists another activity and a reason to remain in Soulsville USA.

In early 2015, there were two successful tours conducted of Soulsville USA. The first was in April 2015, lead by High Ground News, an internet based newsletter which embedded a journalist in Soulsville USA for three months. To culminate this three month experience that highlighted the neighborhood, a tour was conducted. The second tour, conducted in May 2015, was a part of the Neighborhood, USA Conference hosted by the City of Memphis. The Soulsville USA neighborhood was one of 18 neighborhood tours which hosted convention attendees from all over the United States. Both tours received high accolades from the participants.

The cultural tourism industry has the potential to become a powerful economic engine in the Soulsville USA neighborhood. The strategy would capitalize off of its rich history and leverage the visitors to the Stax Musuem. It provides opportunities for neighborhood people to earn money, as well as bring more positive attention to the Soulsville USA community.





PART FOUR
IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION:
YEARS TO COME





Three Year Timeline

The Planning Team voted to have a Three Year Strategic Plan. Implementation will begin January 2017 through December 2019. In preparation for the next phase, the Implementation Team will develop criteria to determine which of the strategies outlined by the Planning Team will occur. As in the planning process, the implementation team will engage residents, stakeholders and partners in making decisions that provide Soulsville USA with the greatest benefit in executing the strategies.

Building Relationships, Adapting and Getting Adopted

Soulsville USA will forge ahead with continued community engagement. During the implementation phase we will continue to build upon our partnerships and make inroads with local government officials at every level. The City of Memphis has recently created a new Office of Comprehensive Planning. This marks the first time in nearly three decades that the city has updated its comprehensive plan. To that end, Soulsville USA desires to be included in the city's comprehensive plan and will adjust our plan to align with goals and objectives of the city. Ultimately, we would like for the Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan to be officially recognized and adopted by city council.

Budget

The budget will be determined by the implementation team and will be contingent upon which strategies and activities that are chosen to execute.

Sustainability Plan



Soulsville USA has gained valuable lessons from Frayser and The Heights, Memphis' first BNCP neighborhoods. One of the greatest lessons learned was a need to have a sustainability plan. If the work is going to continue, there must be a plan in place. Additionally, an official point person is needed. We now understand the importance and need to hire a neighborhood navigator/coordinator. We need someone that will keep this momentum going.

We took to heart the need for a communication strategy. There must be an orchestrated effort to keep the community informed and engaged. Other tenets to the success of implementing the Soulsville USA Revitalization Action Plan is a continued focus on community engagement, capacity building, resident leadership development, lessons learned, and the development of a funding plan. At all times, we must maintain community connections, evaluate ourselves, ensure results-based accountability and data driven decisions, and allow flexibility to adjust the plan based on changes in the community and residents' preferences of what issues should be priorities.

**You shouldn't have to leave your
neighborhood to live in a better one.**

Majora Carter

Conclusion

When Soulsville USA began the BNCP process in early 2015, the neighborhood had few expectations. Over the last 18 months, the collective community has had many accomplishments. Resident leaders are more empowered to engage local businesses and government when seeking support for its neighborhood. The community continues to build capacity around its focus areas: blight, crime prevention and public safety, and housing and economic development. Partnerships are maintained and others are being formed. The Crime Prevention and Public Safety Team initiated a Neighborhood Watch program. The Blight Team joined forces with Memphis City Beautiful, Innovate Memphis, and the City of Memphis Parks Division to advocate for improvements in Chandler Park. While Soulsville USA has a strong neighborhood association, this planning process led to increases in civic engagement. As the Planning Team passes the torch to the Implementation Team, Soulsville USA will be linked to other capacity-building initiatives. BNCP guided Soulsville USA in creating a comprehensive revitalization action plan that can lead to improving the quality of life of residents and the neighborhood.



From Left To Right – Lori Spicer Robertson, Rebecca Matlock Hutchinson and Henry Ford; Daniel Watson; Ben Ivy, and Neighborhood Youth. All were participating in various Work Session Meetings.

Comments from Soulsville USA residents and stakeholders about the planning process and participating in the initiative funded by the BNCP.

For the past 18 months the Soulsville USA Neighborhood has seen a tremendous facelift. We have worked shoulder to shoulder. There has been an outpour of commitment. A better person couldn't have been selected to lead us. Rebecca Matlock Hutchinson has given 120% of herself.
Everlena Yarbrough, Resident

I have learned so much. This was a great experience. The engagement from the residents and the entire community was super! The process was great for getting neighbors involved.
Ben Ivy, Resident

I enjoyed getting to know the neighborhood people better. The community work felt good and it was great to be able to give back to a place that has given so much to my mother and grandmother.
Robin Carter, Resident

Rebecca has brought awareness I have learned about the other entrepreneurs that live and have businesses here. We have started supporting each more. This also means that we are boosting the neighborhoods' economy.
Talbert Fleming, Jim and Samella's

This experience totally redirected me. I went from being a passionate volunteer to a resident. I had never thought about moving to Soulsville before. We are ready to do more.
Tamara Gavin, Resident

The experience expanded my horizons and helped to connect to the at-large community: stakeholders, residents, social service providers. It has connected the past to the future. It also generated a sense of extended ownership.

Jacqueline Scruggs,
Knowledge Quest

What was most impressive to me was the sticktoitiveness and perseverance of the residents. I have never seen this at this level in this neighborhood before. It was remarkable to observe.

Jeffrey Higgs, LOCCDC

I became active in Soulsville and the Neighborhood Association after the 2015 Town Hall Meeting. The following months were engaging and educational. I've been awakened to the needs and strengths of my neighborhood. I believe that we will evolve as a national model.

Wilma Lewis Kelly, Resident

The End