



LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES

Technical Assistance Program



Local Foods, Local Places
Community Action Plan
for the South
Cumminsville
Neighborhood in
Cincinnati, Ohio
December 2017



For more information about Local Foods, Local Places visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places>

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Community Story

Located northwest of downtown Cincinnati, the adjacent neighborhoods of South Cumminsville and Millvale are among the smallest and lowest-income of Cincinnati's 52 neighborhoods.¹ These two neighborhoods occupy the Lower Mill Creek Valley, an industrial corridor west of downtown Cincinnati flanked by residential neighborhoods. Linking these neighborhoods is the north-south artery of Beekman Street, a commercial boulevard defined by many vacant or run-down industrial buildings, modest small businesses such as Mr. Gene's Dog House, and local convenience stores. Mixed into the post-industrial urban landscape are occasional bright spots that indicate a growing energy in the community: a well-maintained park, pop-up fresh food markets, and murals that enliven a pedestrian overpass with community history. While South Cumminsville and Millvale are often associated because of their proximity and shared reliance on neighborhood amenities, South Cumminsville is the primary focus of this document.

South Cumminsville itself is a relatively new neighborhood. It was created in the 1970's with the construction of I-74, which divided the contiguous neighborhood of Cumminsville into South Cumminsville and Northside, leaving South Cumminsville cut off from many neighborhood resources and amenities. The small business district and major parks were in Northside, while much of the industrial district, along with residential areas and a handful of institutions, made up South Cumminsville.

With a population that is 91 percent African American, South Cumminsville's median household income is just \$13,538, and 25 percent of the workforce is unemployed, as



Figure 1 – Mural celebrating local success stories and people. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning



Figure 2 – Google Earth view of I-74 separating South Cumminsville (right) from Northside (left). Image Credit: Google Earth



Figure 3 – Roy Davis (center right), a resident and Working In Neighborhoods volunteer, leading a community tour on the pedestrian overpass between South Cumminsville and Northside. Image Credit: Community Food Lab.

¹ "Project Cool It" South Cumminsville Community Study of Brownfields and Heat Islands. City of Cincinnati Health Department. 2015-2016.

compared to a 6.1 percent unemployment rate for Hamilton County.² These economic factors are part of a larger system of inequity facing neighborhood residents that also includes health outcomes and food access. As described in the city of Cincinnati's 2016 "Project Cool It" Report, South Cumminsville residents have a life expectancy of 71.2 years—16 years less than those living in more affluent Cincinnati neighborhoods. The report cites multiple "economic, social, and place-based stressors that negatively impact daily living, health, and mortality rates."³

In addition to these challenges, the neighborhood lacks convenient and regular fresh food access, and residents face transportation barriers such as broken or missing sidewalks, limited bus service, and few walkable destinations in the neighborhood. For the full community data profile see **Appendix A**.

Despite adversity, neighborhood community groups are actively building new opportunities and connections. Community members have led the development of a community garden, advocated for key improvements for pedestrians such as new crosswalks, and were instrumental in upgrades to the park at Wayne Field. Important community groups include the South Cumminsville Community Council and the South Cumminsville Community Action Team, a group with a broad community focus that came out of a 2013 walkability audit and workshop.

Along with these active community groups, many organizations and agencies are working together in South Cumminsville to address poor economic and health conditions by increasing access to fresh, healthy food and making local food part of the community's economic and community development strategies. Some of the key partners include Working In Neighborhoods, Churches Active in Northside, Our Harvest Coop, the city of Cincinnati, and the leaders of Apple Street Market.

In 2016, Working in Neighborhoods requested assistance through the **Local Foods, Local Places** technical assistance program to develop an action plan for the community to improve fresh food access for community residents, explore new job creation in food enterprises, and develop re-use strategies for



Figure 4 – The former St. Pius Church now houses offices for Working In Neighborhoods, which provides a community computer lab and hosts financial literacy seminars, counseling programs, tutoring, and youth enrichment programs. Image Credit: Renaissance.

² Toward a More Walkable, Prosperous Future South Cumminsville: Built Environment Opportunities for Change. Walkable and livable Communities Institute and Working In Neighborhoods. 2013.

³ "Project Cool It" South Cumminsville Community Study of Brownfields and Heat Islands. City of Cincinnati Health Department. 2015-2016.

underused industrial areas. Additionally, Working In Neighborhoods recognized the need for a community vision and “local foods strategy” that could work together to further empower residents and align stakeholders and new resources around clear, coordinated action. The Local Foods, Local Places program aims to create:

- More economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses.
- Better access to healthy, local food, especially among disadvantaged groups.
- Revitalized downtowns, main streets, and neighborhoods.

The program is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Delta Regional Authority.

Cincinnati was one of 24 communities across the United States selected to participate in the program in 2017. A Local Foods, Local Places steering committee was formed to help the technical assistance team and federal partners prepare for a workshop in South Cumminsville (see Figure 5). The committee intends to formalize their group through regular meetings, community events, and partnership on projects to implement the goals and actions outlined in this report. Prior to the Local Foods, Local Places process, many of these stakeholders worked together on small scale projects under the “South Cumminsville Out of Poverty” project, where fresh food access is one of six priority areas to “bring 40% of residents out of poverty within a generation.”⁴

The remainder of this report and appendices document the engagement process, the workshop activities, and most importantly, the action plan and next steps for achieving the community’s goals. Over the course of three planning calls and workshop discussions, the community’s goals evolved from those in the initial request for technical assistance to the five shown later in this report. They reflect the

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- **Rigel Behrens**, Working In Neighborhoods
- **Sister Barbara Busch**, Working In Neighborhoods
- **Hope Wilson**, Working In Neighborhoods
- **Susan Jorgenson**, Working In Neighborhoods
- **Sandra Davis**, South Cumminsville Community Council
- **Marilyn Evans**, South Cumminsville Community Council
- **Donna Rose**, South Cumminsville Action Team
- **Kristin Gangwer**, Our Harvest Coop
- **Robin Henderson**, City of Cincinnati, Office of Environment and Sustainability
- **Mimi Chamberlin**, Churches Active in Northside
- **Christopher DeAngelis**, Apple Street Market

Figure 5 – Local Foods, Local Places Steering Committee in South Cumminsville



Figure 6 – The pedestrian bridge over I-74. Credit: Google Earth

⁴ Community Letter of Interest submitted to Local Foods, Local Places Program. July 2016.

holistic, collaborative approach to community development already underway in the South Cumminsville neighborhood of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Engagement

The technical assistance engagement process for Local Foods, Local Places has three phases, illustrated in Figure 7 below. The assessment phase consists of three preparation conference calls with the steering committee to establish the workshop goals, agenda, logistics, and stakeholder invitation lists. The convening phase includes the effort's capstone event—a two-day workshop in the community. The next steps phase includes three follow up conference calls to mobilize resources and coordinate future action.

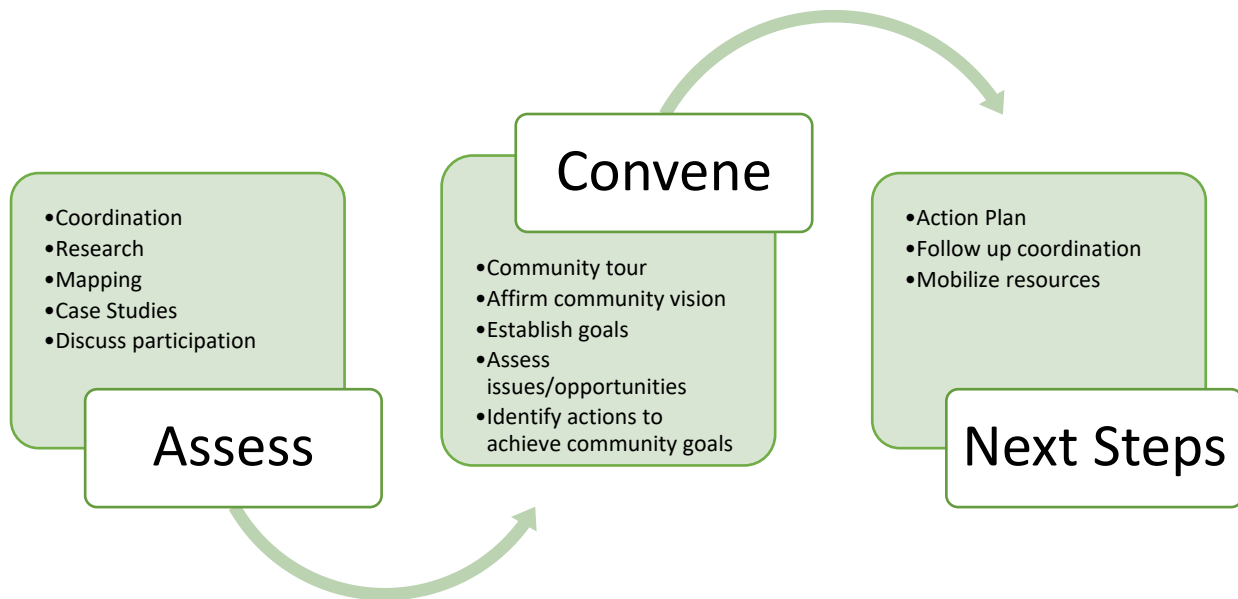


Figure 7 - Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Process Diagram

The community workshop was held on September 26th and 27th, 2017. It included a small lunch gathering with the steering committee members and federal partners, a tour of the community, and an evening community meeting at the Working In Neighborhoods office on Dreman Avenue on Day 1 and an action-planning session, also at Working In Neighborhoods on Day 2. The workshop sign-in sheets are provided in **Appendix B**.

Community Tour

The Local Foods, Local Places steering committee organized a luncheon on September 26th with key stakeholders at Ruth's Parkside Café in the Northside neighborhood to introduce the project to the technical assistance team consisting of consultants and federal agency representatives. Following the luncheon, the steering committee led a tour of key places and projects in the South Cumminsville, Millvale, and Northside neighborhoods including Beekman Street, the Ethel Taylor Academy, the Healthy Harvest Mobile Market, Millvale townhouses, an I-74 pedestrian overpass, the future home of the Apple Street Market, the Northside Farmers Market, convenience stores along Beekman Street, the South

Cumminsville Community Garden, and the renovated church that is home to Working In Neighborhoods. The tour provided an overview of the neighborhood’s challenges and opportunities and allowed for informal discussions about the local food system and place-making efforts. Several locations visited are shown in pictures here and in **Appendix C**.

Vision and Values

The workshop was attended by about 25 South Cumminsville residents, stakeholders, and federal agency representatives. During the community meeting on September 26th, the technical assistance team facilitated a series of exercises that captured the group’s aspirations for the future of South Cumminsville and their understanding of the current challenges and opportunities relating to the city’s food economy.

First, every person in the room was asked to stand up and complete the sentences: “*This I believe about my neighborhood...*” and “*I believe fresh, healthy food is important because...*”. This exercise captured how residents feel about

their community and role that local foods can play in South Cumminsville’s future.

The word cloud in Figure 10 was composed from the “This I believe” statements, which are contained in full in

Appendix D. Next, community members were asked to write a

newspaper headline about something positive happening in South Cumminsville 10 years from now, and by way of doing this to define what success means. This exercise captured elements that people desired



Figure 8 – The Healthy Harvest Mobile Market stop at the Ethel M Taylor Academy on Beekman Street. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning



Figure 9 – Pedestrian bridge at Elmore and Beekman, with murals. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning

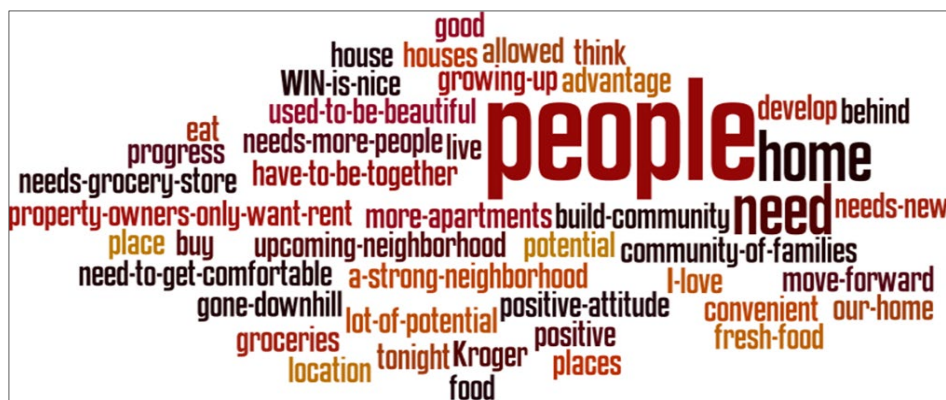


Figure 10 – Word cloud of the results of the This I Believe exercise where participants shared what they believe about South Cumminsville. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning

for the future. Participants next brainstormed assets and opportunities. Summaries of both day one exercises are shown in Figures 11 and 12, and are available in greater detail in **Appendix D**.

VISIONING SUCCESS

SUCCESS IS WHEN...

- South Cumminsville overcomes obstacles!
- People slow down and stay awhile.
- We are thriving, and new community-owned businesses, old and young exist.
- We become a destination community.
- Vacant buildings are put into use.
- Housing reaches an all-time high.
- New families move in.
- There are pathways to financial security.
- New Metro bus lines are added.
- Heavy trucks no longer travel residential streets.
- Old factories are converted into a social hub, grocery store, shops, and apartments.
- We have well-cared-for homes.
- We have grocery stores, a deli, a pharmacy and more access to affordable, healthy, fresh food!
- We have a vibrant "Main Street" with opportunities for residents to learn trades and start businesses and restaurants.
- Investors, including the city, Metro, and local contractors, realize that South Cumminsville is a good investment.

Figure 11 – Workshop Participants were asked to define success. A summary of their responses is shown above.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

OUR ASSETS ARE...

- Our residents, people, and partnerships.
- A strong community with committed and dedicated leaders.
- Residents who find ways to make it happen.
- Vacant buildings for light manufacturing.
- A Central and convenient location.
- Land for retail.
- Land and properties for housing.

THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO...

- Build new and renovate existing housing.
- Improve facades, homes, streets.
- Encourage the city to help with bringing in investments and new business.
- Market our assets to potential home owners and businesses.
- Brand us as a destination community.
- Increase employment through retail, light manufacturing, and wholesale distribution.
- Create a traffic plan, improve bike routes, and improve access to public transit.
- Access lending for new homeowners and new business owners.
- Establish trade schools and provide training programs.

Figure 12 - Workshop Participants were asked to define assets and opportunities. A summary of their responses is shown above.

The visioning exercises revealed many of the group's aspirations for creative revitalization of industrial buildings and landscapes, economic and community development, entrepreneurship opportunities afforded by local foods, and establishment of the neighborhood as a desirable destination for families, developers, and businesses. This positive, forward-thinking backdrop of values and visions for the future provided the foundation for day two. These workshop goals were further refined on day two, evolving into the action plan implementation tables that are detailed in the next section. In addition to creating the action plan, the second day of the workshop included presentations of case studies by the consultant team covering healthy food access, urban food corridors, downtown revitalization, food

hubs, and other food system-related technical information. It also included an asset mapping exercise that was conducted prior to the final action planning session. The asset mapping helped to identify favorite things, opportunities, and needs, and to generate dialog and ideas in advance of action planning.



Figure 14 –Day two asset mapping exercise. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning

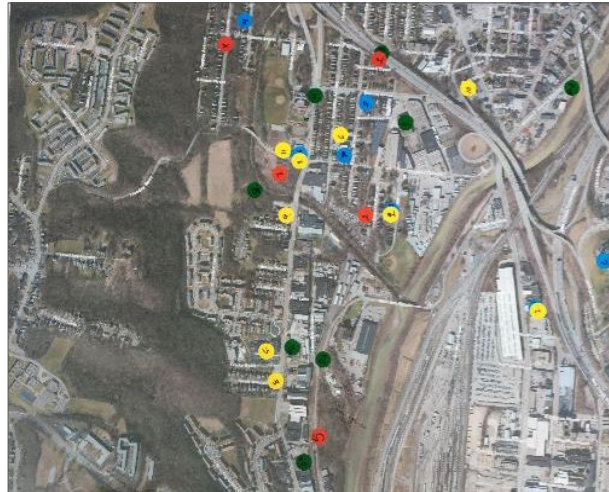


Figure 15 – Photo of the asset mapping exercise where participants were asked to identify favorite places, opportunities, food-related elements, and areas that need immediate fixing or attention. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning

Action Plan

GOAL 1: Improve access to quality, fresh foods

Action 1.1: Utilize existing comprehensive food and nutrition education programs to expand food education offerings for neighborhood residents (Priority Early Action Item)	
What this is and why it is important	When people don't know how to prepare fresh food, they are less likely to purchase and eat it. To address knowledge gaps in the neighborhood, Ohio State University Extension Office could help provide an educational series (e.g. SNAP-Ed; EFNAP) open to residents, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Food purchasing ▪ Nutrition ▪ Cooking ▪ Food Storage
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Events/workshops scheduled. ▪ Number of attendees. ▪ Post-class surveys of knowledge and skills gained.
Timeframe	First workshop scheduled within 90 days
Lead	Working In Neighborhoods, Susan
Supporting cast	SNAP-Ed Ohio State University Extension, Cooking for the Family, Nutrition Council, Northside Volunteers, Our Harvest (sponsors of Harvest Day)
Costs and/or resources needed	Partnerships developed, staff time, workshop space and materials

Action 1.1: Utilize existing comprehensive food and nutrition education programs to expand food education offerings for neighborhood residents (Priority Early Action Item)	
Possible funding sources	Ohio State University Extension for teaching capacity; kitchen facility at First Baptist Church could meet space needs

Action 1.2: Engage Beekman Market and Fey’s Market to learn about their healthy corner store and fresh food marketing experiences	
What this is and why it is important	<p>A key question behind this action is whether there is potential for Beekman Market and Fey’s Market to re-engage in healthy food retail. Although the healthy food efforts led by the Center for Closing the Health Care Gap have stalled, it is not clear why. There is the possibility that with key resources and partnerships, coupled with lessons learned from the stalled program, a new healthy food retail initiative could find success.</p> <p>By studying retailers’ recent experiences marketing fresh food in the neighborhood—including successes and failures—the community could develop best practices and new opportunities to create the most effective methods for improving fresh food access. This approach would allow the existing resources of neighborhood corner stores to be included as part of the food access solution and would help avoid duplication of efforts.</p> <p>This outreach could include questions about the interest level among stores to continue to offer healthy food, lessons learned on healthy corner store practices, and what owners need to successfully market healthy food in these stores.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community leaders understand retailers’ needs to successfully market healthy food and how they can support on-going or new efforts. ▪ Next steps are identified to increase healthy food sold by neighborhood corner stores.
Timeframe	0-3 months
Lead	Marilyn Evans, South Cumminsville Community Council, Working In Neighborhoods VISTA
Supporting cast	Produce Perks, Our Harvest Co-op, Healthy Harvest Mobile Market, Center for Closing the Health Care Gap, Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council
Costs and/or resources needed	Marilyn Evans' time; TBD for further steps
Possible funding sources	TBD

Action 1.3: Promote community usage of existing opportunities to purchase fresh food in South Cumminsville and nearby communities	
What this is and why it is important	Increasing community awareness of existing fresh food access options (e.g. Harvest Day, Healthy Harvest Mobile Market, Northside Farmers Market) and the Produce Perks program will connect more community members to quality, affordable fresh food within walking distance. More awareness will increase the opportunities for community members to eat healthier food more frequently and improve the long-term viability of these initiatives. More awareness could be achieved through multiple means, including a publicized resource list for fresh food access in the neighborhood, community food events, resident engagement and feedback, and increased publicity.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalize the Food Access Flyer and distribute to partners, community centers, etc. (completed November 2017). ▪ Double number of residents utilizing Produce Perks at existing neighborhood fresh food outlets. ▪ Increase fresh produce sales at Harvest Day, Mobile Market by 50%.
Timeframe	6-12 months
Lead	Working In Neighborhoods
Supporting cast	Food Coalition 23
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff time ▪ Event costs ▪ Marketing
Possible funding sources	Volunteers, small grants (e.g. WalMart Community Giving Program, etc.)

Action 1.4: Facilitate the first steps towards opening a healthy food restaurant in South Cumminsville	
What this is and why it is important	<p>No healthy restaurant options exist in the neighborhood. Through multiple partners a new concept could be developed that meets neighborhood needs from a price point; offers an affordable, appealing menu; and has a convenient location. Innovative business models could be investigated to create a viable new restaurant in this lower-income area, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pay-what-you-can or pay-it-forward model. ▪ Non-profit with a social mission. ▪ Partnership with a local culinary program, food institution, or existing restaurant (e.g. Mr. Gene’s). ▪ Healthy fast food or fast casual. <p>The community could be engaged in various phases such as needs assessments, market research, product testing, and hiring.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A desirable location is identified. ▪ A committed owner is recruited, or partnership is established. ▪ A viable concept and business plan is created.
Timeframe	12 months
Lead	TBD by South Cumminsville Action Team

Action 1.4: Facilitate the first steps towards opening a healthy food restaurant in South Cumminsville	
Supporting cast	Gerald Fortson, Findlay Market, P.I.P., University of Cincinnati architecture students
Costs and/or resources needed	Community engagement, outreach to potential partners, business plan development
Possible funding sources	City of Cincinnati CED

GOAL 2: Explore new job creation opportunities in new food enterprises

Action 2.1: Connect aspiring food entrepreneurs based in South Cumminsville/Millvale to small business resources and support to help them grow or launch a new enterprise in South Cumminsville/Millvale. (Priority Early Action Item)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>People in low-income communities have ideas and talents that can be the basis for great small businesses, but they often lack the connections, information, and capital to make that happen. Connecting prospective neighborhood entrepreneurs to business education, mentorship, start-up capital, and incubators can support the development of micro-enterprise and small business development in the community.</p> <p>Successful community-based small businesses can provide new jobs, provide services to residents, and encourage additional businesses to locate in the community.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community outreach and engagement to identify and recruit potential food entrepreneurs. ▪ A “short-list”/cohort of resident entrepreneurs is developed to participate in entrepreneurship events and education (e.g. roundtables, workshops, training). ▪ Mentors, partners engaged to help assess stage/readiness of business plans. ▪ Members of cohort matched to appropriate resources, incubators, partners to assist in business development.
Timeframe	90 days—resident recruitment; partners/mentors identified and engaged; programming/events scheduled
Lead	South Cumminsville Community Council/residents form Action Team or working group focused on small business
Supporting cast	Findlay Market Kitchen, MORTAR, HCDC Incubator, Urban League—SCORE, Working In Neighborhoods, Cincinnati State, FreeStore Foodbank—Cincinnati Cooks, CAA, African American Chamber of Commerce, Tom Fernandez, Cincinnati Regional Chamber
Costs and/or resources needed	Business planning/education expertise, mentorship, start-up money, community volunteers and staff time
Possible funding sources	Crowd-sourcing, matching funds, corporate/private foundations, lenders

Action 2.2: Identify and secure a site in the community where food stands, food trucks, and outdoor markets can set up and legally conduct business.	
What this is and why it is important	<p>Developing a visible, safe, and convenient space for vendors to sell their food-related products in the community will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a place for neighborhood entrepreneurs/start-ups to do business. ▪ Help attract existing food truck/farmers market vendors to the community. ▪ Create opportunities for neighborhood “placemaking” on underutilized or vacant land, and leverage resident energy to beautify the neighborhood that will grow out of Actions 5.1 and 5.2. ▪ Take advantage of the “through traffic” coming on and off the interstate, encouraging people who don’t live in the community to slow down and stop by rather than speed through the community. <p>This action can include determination of the best time of day and day of the week to be open (considering that consistent hours encourage regular visitors), the type of vendors that would best attract customers, and ways to connect this action to other actions in this plan.</p>
Measures of success	A suitable site along Beekman or Elmore is selected and secured, vendor(s) start using the space.
Timeframe	6-9 months
Lead	Working In Neighborhoods and South Cumminsville Community Council/residents
Supporting cast	City of Cincinnati, existing local businesses, small vendors
Costs and/or resources needed	Volunteers, insurance/permits, Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, land (ownership/permission), vendors, staff time
Possible funding sources	Place-making grants, existing local businesses as sponsors, South Cumminsville Community Council NSP money

Action 2.3.1: Complete pre-development work to redevelop an existing building as a multi-use commercial site that contains complementary businesses (e.g. restaurant, incubator kitchen, food distribution or processing)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>The building/businesses can serve as an anchor that attracts additional businesses, customers, and residents and catalyze revitalization of the Beekman Corridor. In addition, it will provide a place to sit down and buy an affordable healthy meal, offer services and space for entrepreneurs/business incubation, and opportunities for employment.</p> <p>This action of pre-development work consists of the key tasks of site selection, initial site control, feasibility analysis and business planning, and due diligence leading up to site development (described in Action 2.3.2).</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building selected and site control obtained. ▪ Feasibility analysis, business plan, and pro forma developed. ▪ Due diligence report completed. ▪ Team is ready to move into development phases.
Timeframe	12 months

Lead	Working In Neighborhoods
Supporting cast	South Cumminsville Community Council, City of Cincinnati CED, Hamilton County Landbank, Cincinnati Department of City Planning
Costs and/or resources needed	Staff time, funding for professional services and consultants
Possible funding sources	City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio (e.g. Healthy Food for Ohio program, Finance Fund Capital Corporation), U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Community Development Funding

Action 2.3.2: Redevelop an existing building as a multi-use commercial site that contains complementary businesses (e.g. restaurant, incubator kitchen, food distribution or processing center)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>The building/businesses can serve as an anchor that attracts additional businesses, customers, and residents and catalyzes revitalization of the Beekman Corridor.</p> <p>As the second action in completing a building redevelopment project, this action focuses on design, fundraising, and construction. These efforts naturally follow Action 2.3.1, where site control and project feasibility are established.</p> <p>One early task is the creation of visual materials to communicate the community vision. Action 3.4 could contribute resources for project visualization. Another early task is the purchase or lease of the building.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building concept design and renderings developed (to help with fundraising). ▪ Funding for redevelopment secured. ▪ Construction/redevelopment starts. ▪ Tenants/businesses open.
Timeframe	12 - 24 months.
Lead	Working In Neighborhoods
Supporting cast	South Cumminsville Community Council, City of Cincinnati CED, Hamilton County Landbank, Cincinnati Department of City Planning
Costs and/or resources needed	Staff time; funding for acquisition, design, and construction; tenant recruitment/marketing
Possible funding sources	City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio (e.g. Healthy Food for Ohio program, Finance Fund Capital Corporation), U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Community Development Funding

Action 2.4: Close funding gap needed to open Apple Street Market	
What this is and why it is important	<p>Apple Street Market is a worker- and community-owned cooperative planned for the site of the old Sav-A-Lot grocery in Northside, a neighborhood adjacent to South Cumminsville. Apple Street Market has committed to outreach efforts to ensure neighborhood contractors have an opportunity to bid. When the store opens, it is estimated to provide 17 jobs at prevailing wage, potentially within walking and/or biking distance of South Cumminsville.</p> <p>Northside Engaged in Sustainable Transformation, a CDC in Northside, is working to secure \$500,000 in acquisition funds for the Northside community to purchase the property and has submitted a funding request to the city of Cincinnati. The \$500,000 will leverage the \$3 million in commitments that organizers have secured for improvements to the site and building.</p> <p>A coordinated effort can be launched to secure this city funding, including a public advocacy campaign to raise awareness within City Council, letters of support from business and other associations, direct lobbying of Council members, and identification of at least one Council member as a champion.</p> <p>If city funding doesn't come through, other efforts to achieve this action may include investigating private equity, lending through CDFI's such as LISC or the Community Development Fund, program-related investments, or other funding sources.</p>
Measures of success	Funding needed to begin construction is secured
Timeframe	12 months
Lead	Apple Street Market Board, Northside Engaged in Sustainable Transformation
Supporting cast	South Cumminsville Community Council, Northside Community Council, Northside Business Association, South Cumminsville businesses, community owners, Working In Neighborhoods, Churches Active in Northside
Costs and/or resources needed	Staff and volunteer time to demonstrate community support to the city
Possible funding sources	Staff, volunteers, in-kind marketing donations

GOAL 3: Create redevelopment solutions for underused industrial areas.

Action 3.1: Complete a prioritized inventory of vacant buildings and lots in the neighborhood that builds on existing plans and property lists (e.g. Project “Cool It,” the inventory included in the 2013 Beekman Street Corridor Plan, etc.) (Priority Early Action Item)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>Before undertaking broad redevelopment efforts, community leaders need a clear understanding of the land and building resources at hand. After reviewing the existing list of vacant industrial properties to ensure it is complete, the community and partners will develop criteria to prioritize sites for redevelopment.</p> <p>By developing a list of key criteria to prioritize buildings and lots, strategic community redevelopment opportunities can be shared with potential developers and the public. The inventory could include current ownership, size, any known contamination, other features of relevance to potential developers such as access and building visibility, and issues of community interest such as walkability or alignment with other community goals.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing list of industrial properties updated. ▪ Building inventory completed. ▪ Criteria developed with residents and partners to prioritize redevelopment sites. ▪ The inventory list is prioritized by key criteria and shared. ▪ Priority development sites selected and publicized.
Timeframe	6-9 months
Lead	Working In Neighborhoods, Cincinnati Department of Community and Economic Development
Supporting cast	Academic partners, local business associations, resident action teams
Costs and/or resources needed	Staff and/or paid consultant time for research and preparation of an inventory report
Possible funding sources	Working In Neighborhoods staff time, planning interns, Cincinnati city staff

Action 3.2: Assess brownfields on Beekman Street and other sites to determine contamination status and whether cleanup is needed	
What this is and why it is important	Understanding the extent of contamination across properties in the neighborhood is an initial step in moving sites such as Beekman Street towards redevelopment. This information is needed to determine redevelopment viability, begin the process of remediation (if needed), and eventually move properties such as these into development.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental assessments are completed. ▪ Funding for any needed remediation is identified. ▪ Any needed remediation is completed. ▪ Development is initiated.
Timeframe	3 months to identify site needs and brownfield status
Lead	City of Cincinnati OES
Supporting cast	Working In Neighborhoods, residents, developers, EPA

Action 3.2: Assess brownfields on Beekman Street and other sites to determine contamination status and whether cleanup is needed	
Costs and/or resources needed	City, Working In Neighborhoods, and partner time
Possible funding sources	City of Cincinnati, grants, developer investment, EPA Brownfields program (for public properties)

Action 3.3: Initiate a "lighter, quicker, cheaper" approach to bring multiple local food and community development strategies into a targeted small area in the neighborhood	
What this is and why it is important	<p>The goal of this action is to demonstrate the viability of local food, food access, and placemaking initiatives through quick wins, visual improvement, new energy around food access and events, and strengthened community connections. By focusing on a small area such as a single block, efforts and energy are magnified, and the resulting projects take on greater visibility and impact. The lessons and momentum in this small area can then be used to open up new opportunities across the neighborhood.</p> <p>This action is related to Action 2.2, where a site would be secured for a range of temporary vending activities. The highly visible and tangible efforts proposed in this action, if directed towards a new site identified and secured (Action 2.2) could catalyze greater community change by focusing clean-up and beautification on places where new enterprise could take immediate advantage of the improvements.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Streets are cleaned up and beautified. ▪ More real estate is rented or sold. ▪ Jobs are created for residents in new or expanded businesses. ▪ Greater social interactions across the community.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 months for area identification ▪ 3-9 months for tangible actions to follow in the target area
Lead	Resident Action Teams, Community Council
Supporting cast	Working In Neighborhoods, residents, students, local businesses, volunteers
Costs and/or resources needed	Volunteers, materials/supplies, tools, paint (?)
Possible funding sources	Community Council NSP funds, Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, Engage Cincy, crowdfunding campaigns, local business sponsorships, community grants (e.g. WalMart, Home Depot offer small grants for community projects)

Action 3.4: Once a building has been selected in Action 2.3.1, use it as the central element in a locally relevant, creative, and transformative vision for the community	
What this is and why it is important	<p>By creating a compelling vision for a vacant building, the community can take proactive action to generate interest among developers and help guide development towards outcomes the community prefers. As more developer interest is drawn to the neighborhood, a resident-generated vision for redevelopment will help ensure that neighborhood values are included at the outset of a project. In addition, an exciting vision could be used on its own as a marketing tool to generate developer interest and highlight the significant community support around particular types of redevelopment.</p> <p>The idea behind this action is that a visual image of vibrant redevelopment will help attract investment. Partnering with students or other teams capable of visualizing the changes will result in greater excitement and ability to fundraise for impactful redevelopment projects. Centering the visualization exercise on a building with a supportive owner that is already targeted for redevelopment will help focus attention where it will be most effective.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A vision is developed and meets the approval of the South Cumminsville Community Council. ▪ The vision is shared widely and used for fundraising in Action 2.3.2.
Timeframe	About 12 months
Lead	Local Foods Local Places Steering Committee, or the South Cumminsville Action Team
Supporting cast	Working In Neighborhoods, partner organizations, Cincinnati Department of Community and Economic Development, local planning or architecture students
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paid or volunteer designers to facilitate a public visioning process and generate effective graphics to communicate the vision ▪ Volunteer time
Possible funding sources	University students, volunteer time, city grants

GOAL 4: Improve all modes of transportation.

Action 4.1: Maintain community momentum on sidewalk installations and repairs (Priority Early Action Item)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>Sidewalks are of vital importance to an urban community. They allow people to feel safe as they move around their neighborhood, and they encourage walking and indicate a recognition that pedestrians are a vital part of a community's overall transportation mix.</p> <p>This action has multiple components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the 2013 walkability report, and create a progress report on implementation of its recommendations. ▪ Create a plan for sidewalk repair or installation that is affordable for affected property owners. Are there cost-shares, grants, or new policies that could be developed? ▪ Support ongoing resident engagement around sidewalk issues to display community-wide interest.
Measures of success	More sidewalks in South Cumminsville are repaired and installed.
Timeframe	12-24 months
Lead	Community Action Team
Supporting cast	Cincinnati Planning, residents, City Manager's Office (Office of Accessibility, Johnathan Lawniczak)
Costs and/or resources needed	Time spent organizing, costs for sidewalk repair
Possible funding sources	City income tax, grants, cost-shares with trucking companies or other heavy users of affected streets

Action 4.2: Amplify voices of residents and partners to advocate for better public transit service and amenities (bus shelters, more frequent pickups, expanded routes—e.g. on Cass Ave)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>This action will expand or initiate community organizing efforts that convey community sentiment and desires for transit to city leaders and decision-makers.</p> <p>Increased bus access will allow residents to more easily reach larger grocery stores and travel to jobs and businesses outside of the neighborhood, enabling carless residents to more fully participate in and contribute to Cincinnati's economy. Increased bus service would also allow households with cars to choose the bus more often, reducing car traffic and its negative impact in the city.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of community members engaged in advocacy. ▪ Buses are rerouted to Cass Street. ▪ More bus routes and more frequent bus service are added to South Cumminsville.
Timeframe	6-12 months, plus ongoing advocacy
Lead	Residents, South Cumminsville Community Council, Community Action Team

Action 4.2: Amplify voices of residents and partners to advocate for better public transit service and amenities (bus shelters, more frequent pickups, expanded routes—e.g. on Cass Ave)	
Supporting cast	Better Bus Coalition, Everybody Rides Metro, other bus advocacy organizations, residents across Cincinnati
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizing time for resident-led groups ▪ Costs of expanded bus service and added stops to existing routes
Possible funding sources	Volunteers, Metro budget

Action 4.3: Explore the creation of safe, affordable transportation for seniors	
What this is and why it is important	<p>A system is needed to safely and efficiently transport senior residents to essential destinations such as grocery stores, doctors and healthcare, parks, and other places that support health and active community participation. The mode of transportation might include ridesharing systems of electric scooters, subsidized service of Lyft or Uber, locally tailored or on-demand bus service, or dedicated transportation to and from key businesses such as grocery stores.</p> <p>Many residents don't have cars, and other transportation options would help improve quality of life for carless seniors. It would support community integration, greater participation across all ages in community life, and the ability of seniors to age in place.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A survey of community need and interest is completed. ▪ Feasible concept for transportation system is developed.
Timeframe	Survey in 3-9 months, concept development in 12-18 months
Lead	South Cumminsville Community Council, Community Action Team
Supporting cast	Council on Aging, Senior Services, AARP, City Manager's Office (Office of Accessibility, Johnathan Lawniczak) and City Council, Churches Active in Northside, Apple Street Market
Costs and/or resources needed	Volunteer time to create and deliver surveys and to create and refine transportation ideas
Possible funding sources	N/A

GOAL 5: Develop a brand and identity for the community

Action 5.1: Create a beautification committee for the neighborhood (Priority Early Action Item)	
What this is and why it is important	<p>This committee will act to prioritize beautification and improvement projects, advocate for city funding, and organize neighborhood clean-up and placemaking events. For example, the committee might plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paint the walkway over Beekman Street. ▪ Increase lighting along Beekman Street. ▪ Increase greenery as a buffer between residents and businesses. ▪ Plant more trees to beautify the neighborhood, clean the air, and reduce the heat island effect. ▪ Reduce asphalt and paved surfaces in the neighborhood. ▪ Increase neighborhood use of the city's app for citizen complaints about the physical environment

Action 5.1: Create a beautification committee for the neighborhood (Priority Early Action Item)	
Measures of success	A core group of 4 to 5 people meet regularly and report to the Community Council on progress and activity.
Timeframe	3 - 6 months
Lead	South Cumminsville Action Team working group
Supporting cast	Working In Neighborhoods, residents, partner organizations, local businesses and business associations, Corporate Repair Day
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant writer ▪ Coordinator ▪ Volunteer time ▪ Clean-up and beautification activity costs
Possible funding sources	City grant funding (Engage Cincy Grant, Keep Cincinnati Beautiful Safe and Clean grant?), local businesses, volunteers

Action 5.2: Strengthen existing community events and develop new neighborhood events to build community (Priority Early Action Item)	
What this is and why it is important	Neighborhood events can be good ways to grow community engagement and generate support for other efforts. These events can help grow commitment to the community, increase capacity for change by involving more residents in planning, and generate hope among residents for positive change. In addition, events provide a platform for community leaders to share progress, activities, and a vision for the neighborhood. A variety of events can be created, promoted, and expanded through this action, e.g., community picnics, reunions, holiday dinners, and parades. In particular, residents can focus on expanding the 2017 Holiday Dinner and creating a new community event to be held spring/summer 2018.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More events are held. ▪ Attendance at existing events increases. ▪ Overall community engagement increases (could be measured as attendance at Community Council meetings).
Timeframe	12 - 18 months
Lead	South Cumminsville Community Council
Supporting cast	Residents, Working In Neighborhoods, partner organizations
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved forms of communication ▪ Funds for events and promotion ▪ Volunteer time
Possible funding sources	Grants from Artswave, local businesses such as banks and community institutions, city funds to the Community Council (through the Neighborhood Support Program)

Action 5.3: Create a marketing strategy that publicizes opportunities and strengths of South Cumminsville	
What this is and why it is important	Central to South Cumminsville's redevelopment and community development goals is a recognized need to effectively portray the opportunities here to more residents and to the wider city. Many of the actions proposed in this plan will rely on effective communication. The creation of a marketing plan will provide a shared resource for messaging and communication that can be used by multiple groups, will help build a consistent image for South Cumminsville, and will help coordinate the many activities across the neighborhood.
Measures of success	A marketing strategy is completed.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6-12 months
Lead	South Cumminsville Community Council
Supporting cast	Working In Neighborhoods, Marketing consultants
Costs and/or resources needed	Costs of marketing plan
Possible funding sources	Raise funds from foundations and private sources

Additional Action Ideas

The action plan above represents the efforts at the workshop to detail top priority actions. In addition to these actions, several additional actions were brought up during the brainstorming process that South Cumminsville may consider pursuing in the future as well. They are listed here for future reference.

GOAL 1: Improve access to quality fresh foods.

- Identify a possible relocation site for Our Harvest, with existing cold storage.
- Expand production in the community garden.
- Find new outlets for getting fresh produce to residents.
- Explore home food delivery options for residents.

GOAL 3: Create redevelopment solutions for underused industrial areas.

- Expand affordable, owner-occupied housing.
- Talk to the city about the criteria needed to create/designate a Neighborhood Business District and funding opportunities for business district improvements
- Bring partners together to find a South Cumminsville location for Our Harvest Food Hub.
- Find a productive use for the tract of land behind Fey's Market.
- Explore opportunities that may come from Beekman Street's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone status.
- Advocate for high-speed internet throughout the neighborhood.

GOAL 4: Improve all modes of transportation.

- Extend transit beyond the city.
- Expand streetcar lines.
- Engagement residents in Green Cincinnati Plan update (transit plan)

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- Schedule meeting with senior disability advocate (City Manager’s Office), discuss potential for pilot project
- Consider possibility of bikeshare if desire shown in the community for this.

GOAL 5: Develop a brand and identity for the community.

- (No additional ideas captured)

Implementation and Next Steps

Three post-workshop conference calls were held during October, November and December 2017, following the workshop. The calls were held with the Local Foods, Local Places steering committee and a few additional stakeholders whose interest was cultivated during the workshop. They worked to refine the action plan and add clarifying language. Some of the key actions and post-workshop developments included the following:

- The steering committee met several times post-workshop and completed missing tables and actions. They also prioritized actions they felt should receive priority attention.
- The Steering committee team organized a local campaign to let City Council know of the citizen support in favor of having the city allocate funding to purchase of the Save-a-Lot store for the Apple Street Market. After a call-in campaign and much local activity, seven of the nine City Council voted in December to approve Northside Engaged in Sustainable Transformation funding of \$500,000 for the building.
- The steering committee intends to continue meeting in 2018 to further work on the priority action plan sections.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Community Data Profile
- Appendix B – Workshop Sign-in Sheets
- Appendix C – Workshop Photo Album
- Appendix D – Workshop Exercise Results and Asset Mapping
- Appendix E – Funding Resources
- Appendix F – References