



Community Action Plan for Union Heights, North Charleston, South Carolina

LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

November 2018



For more information about Local Foods, Local Places visit:
<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places>

CONTACT INFORMATION:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Project Contact: **Darlene Byrd**
Office of the Administrator | Office of Policy | Office of Community Revitalization
4223C WJC West Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, MC 1807T
Washington, DC 20460
Tel: (202) 566-2168
Email: Byrd.Darlene@epa.gov

North Charleston, South Carolina Contact: **Omar Muhammed**
LAMC Executive Director and CCRA Community Project Coordinator
Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities (LAMC)
2125 Dorchester Road
North Charleston, SC 29405
Tel: 843-737-4530 (office)
Email: ccrabej@gmail.com

Cover photo credit: Top and bottom images: Action Communication and Education Reform. Middle image from day one of the workshop: EPR PC

COMMUNITY STORY

The city of North Charleston is the third largest city in South Carolina. It occupies 76 square miles north of Charleston, on a neck of land bounded by the Ashley River on the west and the Cooper River on the east. It has been a longtime industrial city whose history and economy have been linked to industries and manufacturing attracted by the proximity of rail and port facilities. Many of the residential neighborhoods in North Charleston, especially the older ones, grew as working-class communities to support the nearby industries and manufacturing.

The Union Heights neighborhood in the southernmost tip of the city was founded shortly after Emancipation and the Civil War by freed slaves who settled on this seemingly low-value lowland area of an abandoned plantation. Over the years they turned this area into a valued place of their own as the predominately African-American community of Union Heights evolved and grew into a vibrant working-class but stable neighborhood with movie theaters, grocery stores, restaurants, a pharmacy, and other small retail. The city saw its boom in the 1950s and early 1960s.

The 1960s and 1970s saw a decline of the area's urban prosperity, and during urban renewal efforts of these years, new highways bifurcated some of these older neighborhoods further causing their decline. Exit 218 cut the lower half of Union Heights off from the rest of the neighborhood. As a result, the neighborhood has slipped into greater poverty and declining infrastructure. At the same time as its population is aging, younger people born there choose to leave more often than stay. The final straw of decline came for North Charleston with the closing of the Charleston Navy Base on April 1st, 1996, which decimated the economic activities once enjoyed and resulted in a flight of middle-income families from the area for economic opportunities in the northern part of North Charleston. Revitalization efforts are hindered by the lack of socially impactful investment and development to help community residents break the cycle of poverty and revitalize their community without displacing current residents. The communities on the south end of North Charleston have several brownfields, superfund sites, and other environmentally challenged properties, which make it difficult to generate redevelopment interest.

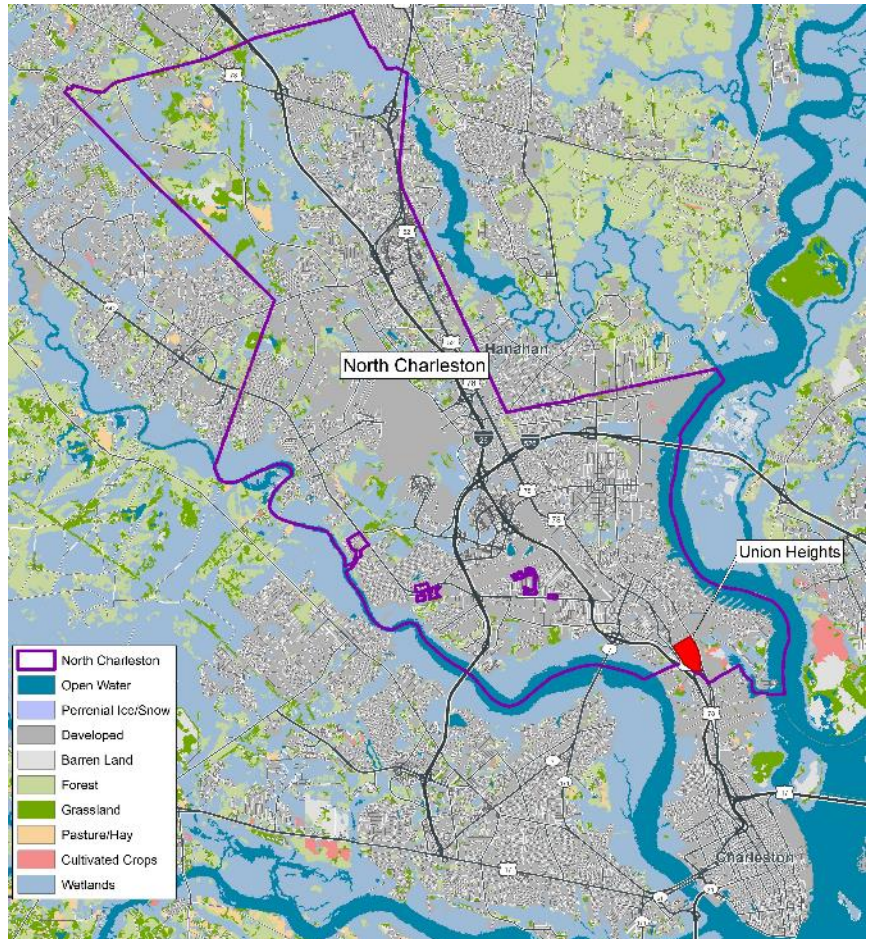


Figure 1 -- North Charleston Context Map. Union Heights shown in red. Map Credit: EPR.

Despite decline and challenges, there remains a strong core of Union Heights residents who remember what once was and remain committed to cohesion and rebuilding. Many retain a strong sense of pride, place, and community. Community leaders frustrated with traditional approaches to urban redevelopment coalesced around four concerns identified by community residents as revitalization catalysts for community redevelopment efforts: affordable housing, economic development, education, and environmental justice. The community, with the assistance of the city of North Charleston, developed a revitalization plan that identifies processes and strategies for redevelopment. The resulting plan was adopted by the city of North Charleston City Council and included in the city's Comprehensive Plan. The community formed a non-profit called the Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities (LAMC) to lead the revitalization efforts in 2005.

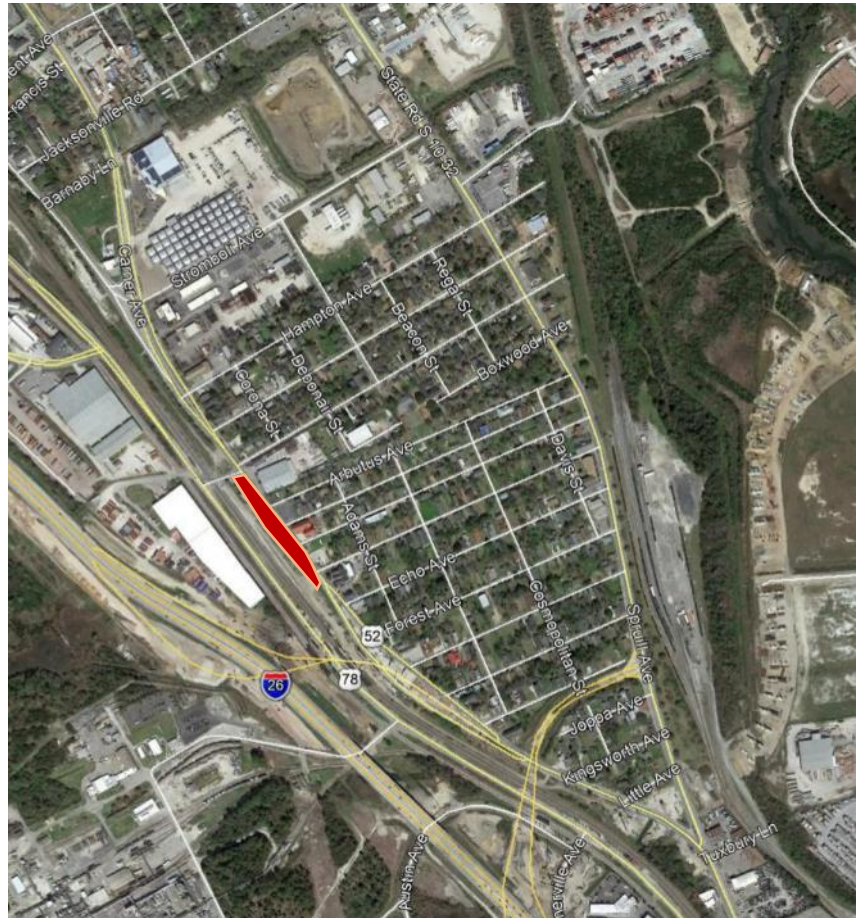


Figure 2 -- Union Heights aerial (Google Earth). Red area shows the location of the future Mary Davis Memorial Park site.

LAMC is working with its strategic partners (Moving Forward Network, Environmental Protection Agency - National Office and Region IV Office, and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) to address the environmentally challenged properties, mainly brownfields.¹

Groups like the Union Heights Council and LAMC are keenly aware that despite the recent decline, this area has seen significant new investment in the port and new large manufacturers like Boeing are locating nearby. The area is poised for new growth, and developable land may become scarcer. North Charleston is already seeing new development pressures for infill and redevelopment, and nearby neighborhoods are transforming. On the one hand, this new growth signals prosperity and opportunity, but on the other hand it also comes with rising land values and the threat of displacement for long-time residents in places like Union Heights. The area's civic groups are committed to guiding renewal and a return to prosperity, but on their own terms and keeping the interest of current residents in mind.

Ever on the lookout for opportunities to improve the neighborhood, LAMC opened discussions with the AME Cavalry Church in early 2017 about a quarter-mile long stretch of property the church had acquired about 12 years prior. The property, known as the Pressley Property, sits on the west side of the neighborhood, between

¹ Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities. "Local Foods, Local Places 2017-2018 Application." July 2017.

Meeting and King Streets and adjacent to the railroad. For many years this property was vacant, underused, or a part-time dumping ground for construction or other waste or debris, until the owner, Mr. Pressley, received funding to clean it up and transfer title to the Church with the stipulation that the property would become a passive community park. For years nothing happened to the property, the parcel remained vacant, and the clean up records were lost. However, the long-simmering idea for developing the property into a community park and asset still held in residents' imaginations.²

In July 2017, LAMC requested assistance through the Local Foods, Local Places program to develop an action plan to build this park into a community asset that supports food access, health, and vitality. Ideas for the park included an open-air market to provide access to fresh, healthy food (fruits and vegetables) and support local businesses and farmers; a community-based Café that could host cooking demonstrations and teach local youth culinary skills with a focus on the Gullah culture; and a covered shelter with solar panels installed on the roof to provide power. The application requested a facilitated workshop with community residents and other key stakeholders to help logically step through a process which strengthens and amplifies the voice of residents to ensure their concerns are addressed with this project. They requested that the workshop also help refine ideas with visual and design concepts to develop a roadmap for sustainably developing the passive park. This request resonated closely with the goals of the Local Foods, Local Places program, which are 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 Local Foods, Local Places program is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Delta Regional Authority. North Charleston was one of 16 communities across the United States selected to participate in the program in 2018, from over 80 applicants. As part of the Local Foods, Local Places process, LAMC formed a steering committee comprised of a variety of community partners working closely with LAMC and the Union Heights Council (Figure 3). They were supported by a technical assistance team comprised of

Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Team

- Omar Muhammad, Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities, Executive Director
- Herbert Rahim, Charleston Community Research to Action Board
- Bryan Pastor, Calvary AME Church (property owner)
- Barbara Fordham, Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities, Board
- Cathy Ruff, Charleston County
- Chloe Stuber, Student, Master of Public Administration, College of Charleston
- Gladys Moorner, Union Heights Community Council and CCRAB
- Jessica Norris, Audubon Society and Biohabitats
- Abraham Champagne, Student, Master of Resilient Urban Design, Clemson University
- Betsy La Force, Coastal Conservation League
- Katie Zimmerman, Charleston Moves

Figure 3 – The Local Foods, Local Places steering committee for Union Heights, North Charleston, South Carolina

² Conversations with Omar Muhammed (LAMC) and Skip Mikell (Union Heights Council President) during the community tour of the Local Foods, Local Places workshop. October 2018.

consultants and multiple federal and state agency partners (Figure 4). The steering committee worked to define the following workshop goals:

- Build on the opportunities presented by this park to increase and improve food access and equity in the Union Heights area and nearby neighborhoods.
- Generate preliminary ideas for the physical and social elements of the site design for the park.
- Understand and work to improve connectivity and transportation mobility options for the site and the Union Heights community.
- Be proactive about addressing environmental justice and equity concerns as new development happens, and change occurs in this area in the future.
- Explore economic development, job opportunities, and training activities at or near the site.

The remainder of this report and appendices document the engagement process, the workshop activities, and most importantly, the outcome: a community action plan to achieve Union Heights’s goals for the park, health, food, local vitality, jobs, and community justice and revitalization.

ENGAGEMENT

The technical assistance engagement process for Local Foods, Local Places has three phases, illustrated in Figure 5 below. The plan phase consists of three preparation conference calls with the steering committee and technical assistance team to clarify goals and arrange workshop logistics. The convene phase includes the effort’s capstone event—a two-day workshop in the community. The act phase includes three follow-up conference calls to finalize a community action plan and strategize on how to maintain momentum generated during the workshop. The community workshop was held over a two-day period from October 3-4, 2018, and the activities on those days are described below. Workshop park design exercise results are summarized in **Appendix A**, workshop sign-in sheets are provided in **Appendix B**, a workshop photo album is provided in **Appendix C**, a data profile in **Appendix D**, funding resources in **Appendix E**, and general references in **Appendix F**.

Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Team

- Darlene Byrd, EPA Office of Community Revitalization
- Sheryl Good, EPA Region 4
- Rafaela Moura, EPA Region 4
- Cindy Nolan, EPA Region 4
- Bob Rosen, EPA Region 4
- Derek Street, EPA Region 4
- Ron Batcher, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
- Gregory Dale, USDA Rural Development
- Wieslawa Gartman, USDA Rural Development
- Mary Young, South Carolina Department of Social Services, Division of Early Care and Education
- Christine Collins, The Duke Endowment
- Laura Cole, South Carolina Hospital Association (Duke Endowment)
- Beth Mainwaring, Improve Partners
- Jason Espie, EPR PC (technical assistance lead consultant)
- Vlad Gavrilovic, EPR PC (technical assistance consultant)
- Ebony Walden, Ebony Walden Consulting (technical assistance consultant)

Figure 4 – The Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance team.

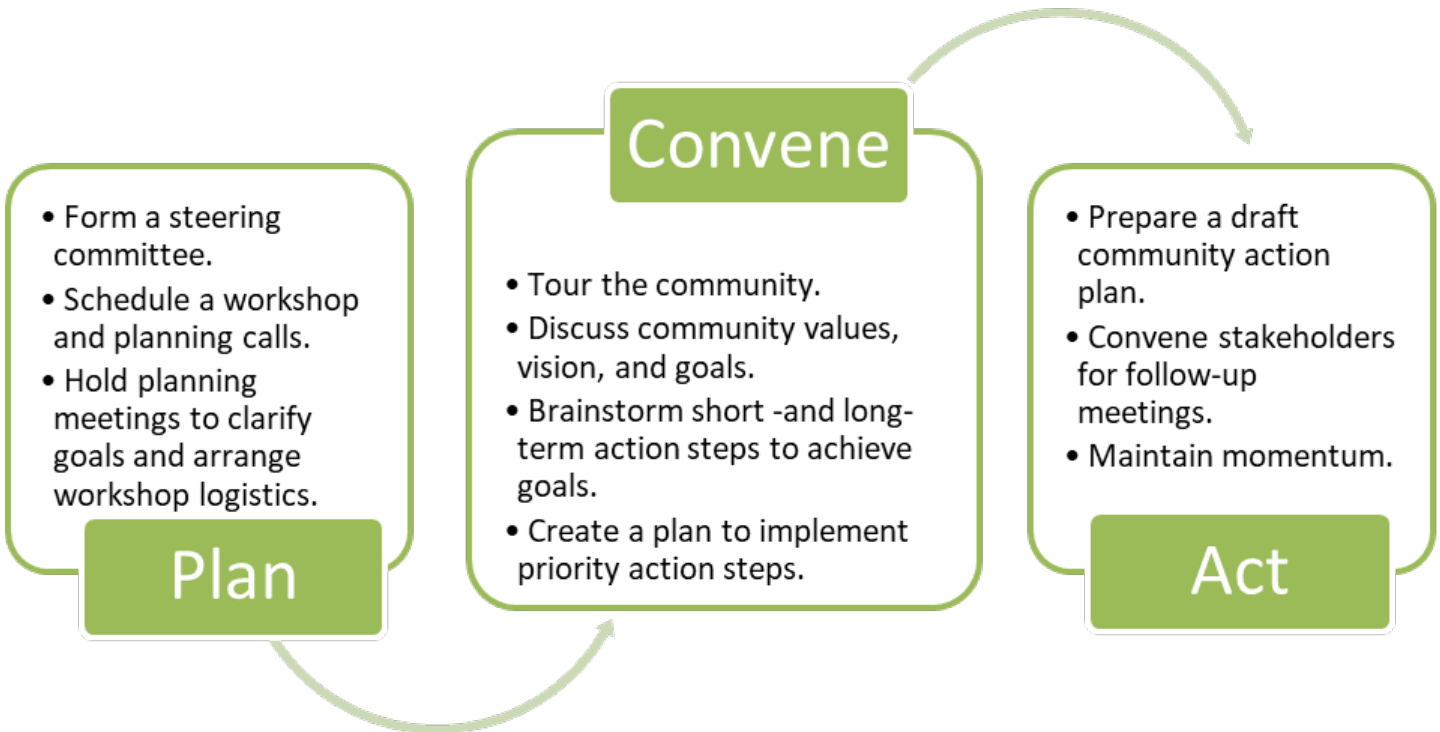


Figure 5 - Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance process diagram

COMMUNITY TOUR

In advance of the first community session on October 3rd, the local steering committee led the technical assistance team on a walking tour of the Union Heights neighborhood. The tour began at Bertha’s Kitchen, a popular local food establishment recognized by a James Beard Award. The future park property is on the opposite side of Meeting Street from Bertha’s, and the group made its first stop there where Omar Muhammed, Executive Director of LAMC, provided a background on the park property. The site is about a quarter mile in length, long and linear, with its width varying from 25 to 200 feet. It has been cleared of debris, but the records of the environmental assessments that were done at the transfer of ownership from Pressley to the Cavalry AME Church are not available. New phase I and II assessments are needed to ensure proper redevelopment of this potentially contaminated site. The site is partially being used for overflow parking for church activities but is largely clear with some overgrown sections.



Figure 6 – Bertha’s Kitchen viewed from the park site opposite Meeting Street. Image credit: EPR

From the park, the walking tour went through parts of the Union Heights neighborhood and heard about housing rehabilitation efforts. The streets of Union Heights are narrow and tight, as the neighborhood street grid was established long before automobiles became the dominate mode of travel. The narrow streets and smaller lots make parking difficult. Off-street parking on the smaller lots is also a challenge. The tour leaders also emphasized a couple stories of recent development pressures in the neighborhood. Because there are pockets of light industrial, mixed-use development, some proposals have come forward for things like horse carriage stables for the horses that lead tourist carriages downtown that would not be compatible with the existing residential character of the neighborhood. LAMC has worked to get these proposals in front of community members so they can voice their opinions to the city and zoning officials.

In the heart of Union Heights is an old, two-story building that for many years was Sunny’s Grocery, a small, local grocery serving neighborhood residents. A developer proposed to redevelop the Sunny’s Grocery lot into apartment housing. The local community fought the proposal because they did not want it to become student housing for the nearby Charleston College. After the proposal was abandoned, LAMC partnered with a community development finance institution and a local foundation to acquire the property and adjacent lot, which they hope to finalize within a year. Their intention is to return it to its original use of affordable residential flats upstairs and a retail store and grocery downstairs. The adjacent vacant lot could serve as parking and possibly a pocket park. The LAMC initiative for purchase and restoration of Sunny’s was well received by the community.

During the stop at the former Sunny’s grocery, tour participants heard from Skip Mikell, President of the Union Heights Council. Skip gave more information about the history of Union Heights, including its origins as an African-American community rising on vacant plantation land in the early years after the Civil War and Emancipation. Skip spoke of the vitality of the community, with celebrated theaters,



Figure 7 – Steering committee and visiting technical assistance team. Image credit: EPR



Figure 8 – Looking north from the middle of the park site, at Delaware Avenue.



Figure 9 – Looking south from the middle of the park site, at Delaware Avenue.



Figure 10 – Sunny's Grocery used to be local grocery in the heart of Union Heights for years.

shops, pharmacies, cleaners, and a vibrant local retail economy of mom-and-pop establishments. He spoke of the decline brought about by base closings and urban renewal projects like Exit 218 that cut off portions of southern Union Heights.

Tour Highlights and Observations

- The neighborhood has a long history. It began as one of first African-American communities after slavery, flourished, and declined.
- The area primarily began as workforce housing for nearby industries.
- It once had many shops, movie theaters, and groceries and was rich in culture and heritage.
- LAMC has been working on housing and environmental justice, plus tracking zoning and development changes and challenges.
- Bus Rapid Transit is coming, and with it changes.
- The community has an aging population.
- It is fighting off development pressures; Residents want development to be community led.
- Residents want a new grocery in Sunny's former building.
- There are zoning challenges: small lots, parking, industrial uses.
- The community is working on restoring a connection in the 218 exit area to re-unite the original Union Heights neighborhood.
- Backed-up stormwater drains have caused flooding. Union Heights leaders are working hard to solve the problem.

Figure 11 – Key lessons and observations learned from the community tour.



Figure 12 – Housing LAMC has worked on in Union Heights. Image credit: EPR



Figure 13 – One of the renovated houses of LAMC. Sign reads "This site has been purchased and is being set aside for Quality Affordable Housing in Our Community." Image credit: Ebony Walden Consulting



Figure 14 – Skip Mikell, President of the Union Heights Council, giving an oral history of the Pressley Property. A video of Mr. Mikell's talk: <https://youtu.be/eAv65rS8crY>

VISION AND VALUES – DAY ONE

More than thirty residents and community stakeholders attended the first public session of the workshop on the evening of October 3rd. The primary purpose of the community meeting was to hear from residents and other stakeholders about

Headlines from the Future: Union Heights

- Leaders in Mont Pleasant, Charleston, Goose Creek Study Union Heights Park Transformation for Better Health
- Community Residents Come Together to Build a Park to Address Redevelopment Challenges
- Union Heights is a Model Community
- Union Heights Preserves Heritage While Becoming Healthiest Community in South Carolina
- Community Developed a Neighborhood Park so Successful that Reservations are Required 6 Months in Advance
- Union Heights Connected by Food and Mobility
- Union Heights is a Thriving Community
- Union Heights is on the Move Toward Greatness
- Union Heights Revitalization and Restoration of Businesses
- Union Heights Revitalized Around Food
- Union Heights Demonstrated New Healthy Heights for Communities
- The Safest Community in North Charleston
- Union Heights Park Draws the Community Out to Congregate, Socialize and Enjoy
- The Community Made a Giant Step

Figure 16 – The future of Union Heights, as told in a hypothetical news headline 5 to 10 years in the future.

This I believe about Union Heights...

Our Community is optimistic; on the move; returning to where we were 60 years ago; on the rise; still a village; healthy; magnetic; still an amazing place; rich; energetic and ready to go. We have a great location; lots of potential; strong bonds; a wealth of knowledge; great love; vision; a lot of capacity; heart; visible passion. Union Heights can revitalize; be a healthy environment; be a model; bring people together; continue to grow; come back. Other people will want to be part. We just need to keep get going!

Figure 15 – Results of a vision and values exercise called “This I Believe” in which participants were asked to complete the statement, “This I believe about my community.”

their hopes for the future of food and revitalization in North Charleston. Omar Muhammed, LAMC Executive Director and local point of contact, welcomed attendees to the event and spoke about the steering committee’s objectives in bringing the community together for this event.

After initial remarks, the technical assistance team introduced the Local Foods, Local Places program with a short presentation, defining the importance of local economies, local and healthy food access, and community vitality. They emphasized the importance of incorporating equity as a measure of the system’s success, especially as it relates to the environmental justice issues facing the Union Heights community and the fact that the area is in a food desert.

The technical assistance team then led attendees through an exercise designed to bring up core values

of the community. The group generated a lot of energy with this exercise, and overarching themes emerged (Figure 15). The technical assistance team also asked workshop participants to write aspirational headlines for 5 to 10 years into the future around food and community revitalization. A sampling of thoughts is shown in Figure 16.

The night concluded with a brief presentation of elements of a passive park design. The elements were written up on flip charts and participants were asked to vote on their preferred design elements (Figure 17 and Table 1). The results informed the designers’ work as they drafted visual concepts for the park.

| Feature | Votes |
|---|-------|
| Water feature | 14 |
| Gathering places – formal and informal, with resting, seating, with shade | 8 |
| Bike and pedestrian trails | 8 |
| Community gardens – raised beds, orchards | 8 |
| Places for fitness – stations, walking | 7 |
| Lighting | 7 |
| Grass and shade – open space, landscaping | 7 |
| Community activities – events, volunteering, training, learning | 4 |
| Sense of enclosure – buffering, planting | 4 |
| Environmental art – interpretation, sweet grass, native species | 3 |
| Natural and environmental features – butterfly garden | 1 |

Table 1. Results of the voting on preferred park elements.

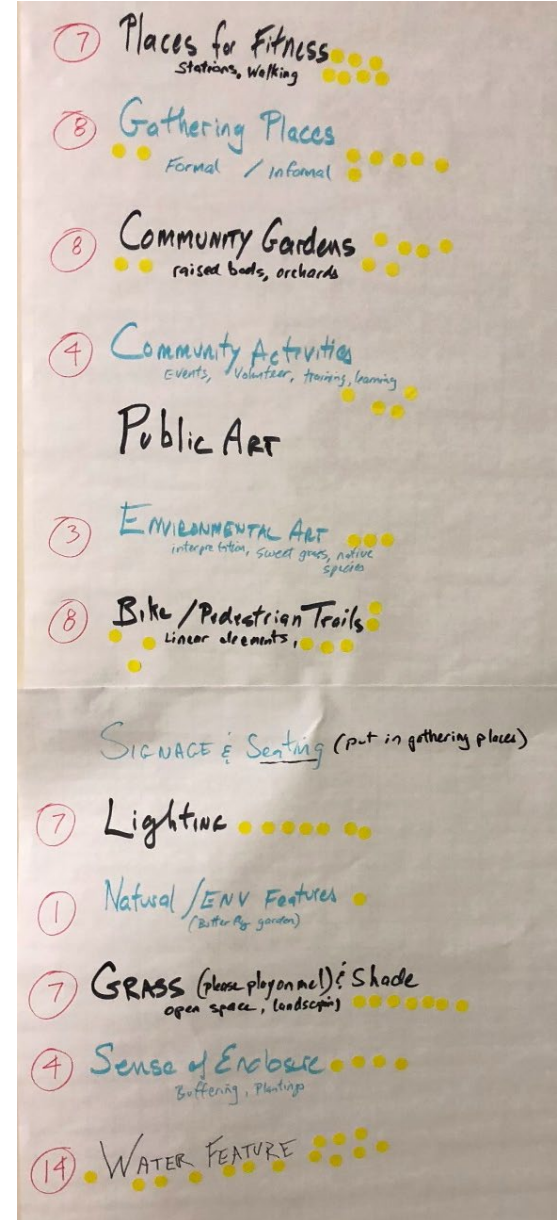


Figure 17 – Image of the design features dot voting. Image credit: EPR

ACTION PLANNING - DAY TWO MORNING

The second day of the workshop began with a recap of night one followed by some case studies. Ebony Walden presented about her experience with the Richmond Food Justice Alliance as an example of a city addressing food insecurity in low-income, high-minority neighborhoods. Jason Espie presented on the Griot Arts Center in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where youth at risk are learning new job skills by managing a community garden and café. Jason also presented on the topic of improving access to healthy food, healthy corner stores, developing local markets and groceries, mobile markets, and fresh stop programs.

Mid-morning the design team did a pin-up of concepts they had been working on in the back of the room to show their work thus far and get more feedback before doing more detailed drawings later in the afternoon.



Figure 18 – Mary Davis Memorial Park design schematic of the center of the park. Appendix A has a more complete set of annotated renderings for the park features and design. Credit: EPR

Park Naming Activity

The morning session was busy and highly interactive. The case study and design pin-up presentations generated more discussion around the goals for the community, illuminating specific actions that could be taken or issues that would need to be addressed. The topic of the park name came up. The property has been known as the Pressley property, but that did not suggest to everyone an appropriate long-term name for the new community asset that was being envisioned. The facilitators asked workshop participants to brainstorm name ideas on post-it notes, anonymously. Then each participant was given a set of voting dots to indicate their preferences. The majority of votes favored commemorating the memory of a revered local resident named Mary Davis and to call the park either the “Mary Davis Memorial Park,” or the “Mary Davis Community Park.” Ms. Davis was a lifelong resident of Union Heights and civil rights activist who hosted Dr. Martin Luther King in Union Heights in the 1960s.

Asset Mapping and Idea Generation

Workshop attendees participated in an asset mapping exercise designed to generate ideas for the community in



Figure 19 – Vlad Gavrilovic, EPR, presents designs to workshop participants. Image credit: EPR. A video of the presentation is available at: <https://youtu.be/wns2q3z0oHc>

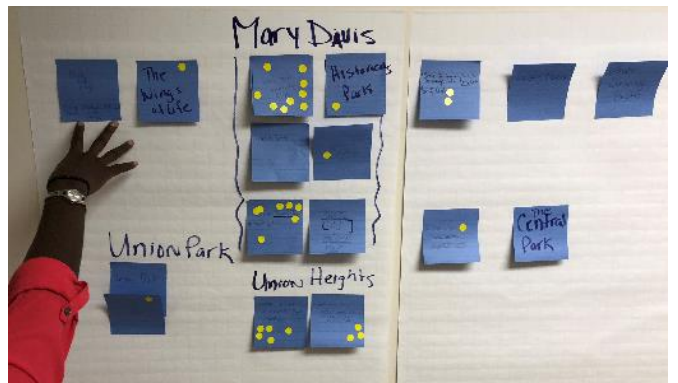


Figure 20 – Dot voting on the park name. Image credit: EPR

advance of action planning. Participants identified quick fixes (red), opportunity areas (yellow), favorite things (blue), and potential parks and green spaces (green). The results of this exercise are in Figure 21 below.

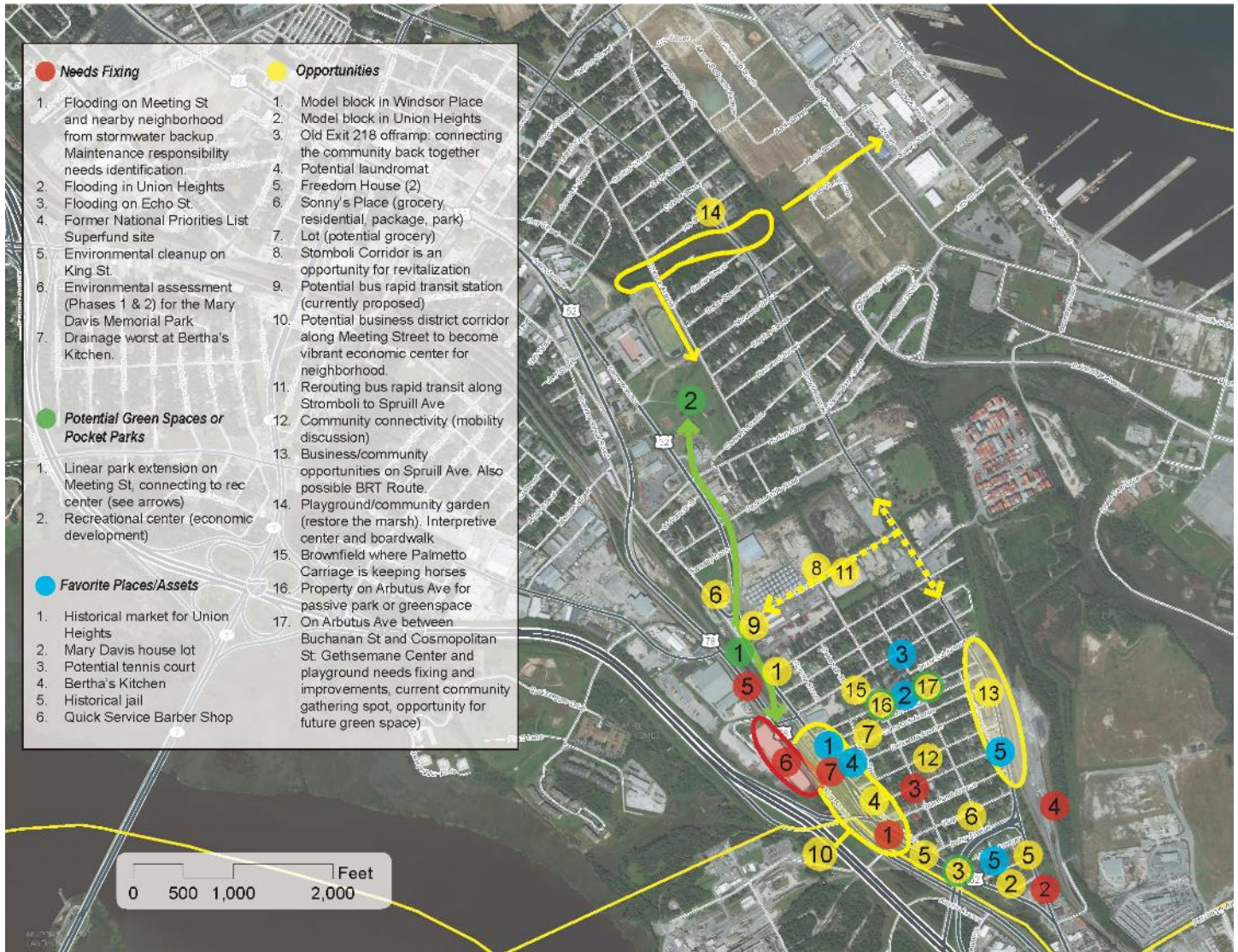


Figure 21 – Results of the asset mapping exercise designed to get participants talking about fixes, opportunities, parks and favorite places in advance of action planning.



Figure 22 – Panorama of the meeting room on day two. Image credit: EPR

ACTION PLANNING - DAY TWO AFTERNOON

The action planning process during the workshop consisted of a few phases of work. First there was a brainstorming session, where participants were asked to write down on post-it notes an action for one or more goals. Facilitators placed the post-it notes on a poster with the corresponding goal statement, clustering duplicate or similar actions. The next phase included a dot voting exercise where participants had a set number of dots to place next to specific actions, or clusters of actions, to indicate which were most important or needed immediate attention. The final phase included small working groups that assessed the prioritization voting and transferred the top 2 to 5 actions onto a blank action planning poster, completing the details of each one, such as importance, timeframe, lead role, etc. The final goals and supporting actions that resulted from this exercise are listed below. The tables that follow provide additional detail for each action.

- Goal 1 – Generate preliminary ideas for the physical and social elements of the park’s site design and engage more stakeholders in the process.
 - *Action 1.1* – Identify and engage new partners for the Mary Davis Community/Memorial Park Steering Committee and invite them to join the park development effort.
 - *Action 1.2* – Develop site design criteria for feasibility.
 - *Action 1.3* – Talk to potential partners to discuss what co-management of the parks could look like.
 - *Action 1.4* – Complete Phase I and II environmental site assessments.
 - *Action 1.5* – Develop and continue a community engagement process to decide design elements.
- Goal 2 – Build on the opportunities presented by this park to increase and improve food access and equity in the Union Heights area.
 - *Action 2.1* – Create a one pager park vision that includes a food component.
 - *Action 2.2* – Identify stakeholders related to food and create a stakeholder engagement plan.
 - *Action 2.3* – Define specific programs and activities that could take place in or near the park.
 - *Action 2.4* – Implement the programs and activities identified in Action 2.3 that have community support.
- Goal 3 – Understand and work to improve the connectivity, transportation, and mobility options for the site and the Union Heights Community.
 - *Action 3.1* – Talk with the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the city of North Charleston about the Exit 218 opportunity.



Figure 23 – Action planning at a goal poster the afternoon of day two. Image credit: EPR



Figure 24 – Presenting out at the conclusion of the action planning session. Image credit: EPR

- *Action 3.2* – Employ traffic-calming strategies on Meeting Street to slow down traffic adjacent to the Mary Davis Community/Memorial Park.
- *Action 3.3* – Meet with Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments to reach a solution together that balances the goals of bus rapid transit with community concerns about noise, safety, and accessibility.
- *Action 3.4* – Talk with Charleston County Department of Parks and Recreation to connect this park plan with their plan.
- *Action 3.5* – Make sure that the port access road drainage does not run into the park.
- Goal 4 – Be proactive about addressing environmental justice and equity concerns as new development happens and change occurs.
 - *Action 4.1* – Research the steps that need to be taken to create an environmental protection overlay district (or other protective overlay district).
 - *Action 4.2* – Complete a GIS zoning mapping project to demonstrate disproportionate impact of industrial zoning on Union Heights and neighboring communities.
 - *Action 4.3* – Develop a zoning plan for the overlay district that is created and informed by the community.
 - *Action 4.4* – Form a Zoning Alert Action Committee.
- Goal 5 – Explore economic development, job opportunities, and training activities that can take place at or near the site
 - *Action 5.1* – Identify three training organizations with the capacity to work with underemployed and unemployed individuals (Turning Leaf, SC Works and Trident Literacy).
 - *Action 5.2* – Successfully recruit 12 underemployed and unemployed residents to participate in green job training associated with the development of the Mary Lee Davis Park.
 - *Action 5.3* – Develop a collaboration with the College of Charleston’s Sustainability Literacy Institute.

Goal 1: Generate preliminary ideas for the physical and social elements of the park’s site design and engage more stakeholders in the process.

The quarter-mile-long and narrow parcel of land along Meeting Street in the Union Heights Neighborhood has a long history. For many years it was a vacant, neglected dumping ground for construction debris and an eyesore. Known as the Pressley property, it was deeded to Cavalry AME Baptist Church with the stipulation that it become a public amenity in the form of a passive park. Though in the church’s possession, nearly twelve years has gone by without much action other than some removal of debris and preliminary environmental screening for which the records cannot be found. New environmental testing is necessary before re-development of any sort can occur. LAMC applied for Local Foods, Local Places with the intention of seeking help for re-energizing the process of transforming this park into a valued community asset and get momentum going again. The purpose of the workshop was to explore how health, food, wellness, equity, and job creation opportunities could be linked to the park effort. During the workshop, a naming exercise was held for the park, and the top choices were to name the future park after Mary Davis, a prominent historic figure in the community and a strong civil rights advocate who hosted Dr. Martin Luther King’s visit to Union Heights in the 1960s. This first goal explores what needs to happen to realize this community asset.

Action 1.1: Identify and engage new partners for the Mary Davis Community/Memorial Park Steering Committee and invite them to join the park development effort.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | <p>As the park planning and design efforts go forward, more outreach and inclusion of new stakeholders and participants will be needed. This action was identified to expand inclusion into the process, reach out to the community as LAMC has a tradition of doing, and continue the dialog necessary to make the design and development an inclusive process. This process was viewed in phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short-term: the steering committee invites 3 new organizations to assist with park development. ● Long-term: the steering committee assesses each participating organization to identify resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To share responsibility. ○ To generate more ideas. ○ To get more people involved. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When 3 more people or groups are added to the steering committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Political representative – Michael Brown ○ Charleston Parks and Recreation Department ○ A member of the business community |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Within 6 months after the workshop |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Omar Muhammad – LAMC ● Herb Rahim – Charleston Community Research to Action Board (CCRAB) |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skip Mikell, President – Union Heights Council |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People and time |
| Possible funding | N/A |

Action 1.2: Develop site design criteria for feasibility.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | <p>The workshop design process identified a conceptual design and some key park features and elements. This action would build on these preliminary concepts and further explore their feasibility, including cost, potential partners, accessibility, zoning, and community support. High priority site ideas can be evaluated based on listed criteria. Given the number of ideas, prioritizing and being practical about feasibility is important.</p> |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When a document with the criteria to analyze each potential design element is created. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By March 31st, 2019 or based on EPA’s funding cycle for Phase I and II environmental assessments, which are ideally done in 2019. ● Apply for site remediation in 2020. |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Omar Muhammad – LAMC ● Skip Mikkel & Herb Rahim – CCRAB |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Park Commission for Charleston County ● Zoning and Planning from Charleston County and North Charleston ● Trident Tech ● Businesses ● South Carolina Port Authority ● South Carolina Department of Transportation ● Sheri Cooper – Palmetto Rail <scooper@palmettorail.com> ● Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments ● College of Charleston students ● The Medical University of South Carolinas for air monitoring |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Park Commission – develop design estimate ● Trident Tech – student landscaping ● University of South Carolina at Columbia – student project ● College of Charleston – student intern studies |
| Possible funding | |

Action 1.3: Talk to potential partners to discuss what co-management of the parks could look like.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| What this is and why it is important | <p>The question of on-going park management and oversight was brought up several times during the workshop, and no one conclusive answer could be identified. This action would explore options for on-going management and maintenance of the park and what partnerships or agreements might need to be formed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short-term: identify potential interest for partnerships. ● Mid-term: discuss co-management roles and responsibilities. ● Long-term: develop a memorandum of understanding clarifying responsibility for long-term sustainability for the site with roles and responsibilities spelled out. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The creation of a memorandum of understanding that defines what entity is responsible for what, i.e., lighting, water expenses, maintenance, programs and management |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From after the workshop until the end of 2019 |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC takes the lead role to ensure that site development conversations continue. |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pastor Swinton and Church leadership – Calvary AME Church ● Low Country Alliance for Model Communities – steering committee partnership ● Charleston Community Research to Action Board (CCRAB) – partnerships networks ● Cathy Ruff – Charleston County ● Director of Park Services – Parks and Recreation |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legal services for memorandum of understanding ● In-kind cost |
| Possible funding | |

| Action 1.4: Complete Phase I and II environmental site assessments. | |
|--|---|
| What this is and why it is important | The cleanup of the site is crucial for the development of the park, and any potential contamination will determine its use and design. Though some site testing was conducted twelve years ago when the deed for the park property was transferred to the church, there are no clear records of these tests. Because the site was a dumping ground for construction debris, there remains some lingering questions as to its contamination. This action seeks to complete an updated round of phase I and II environmental assessments with technical assistance and/or funding from EPA. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When an application for assessment funding is submitted and approved, funding is received, and the assessments are performed. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply for funding by March 2019. ● Receive notification of phase I & II assessments in 2019 and complete by the end of the year. ● Phase II Site remediation could begin 2020. |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Omar Muhammed – LAMC and CCRAB, to initiate the application. |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Calvary AME Church (shared management to be coordinated between LAMC and the church) ● Mark – South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, to help coordinate on site assessment ● Sheryl Good – EPA Region 4 ● LAMC staff, board, and supporters (Audubon, College of Charleston) |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People and time |
| Possible funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EPA for assessments and remediation ● Council of Development Finance Agencies assistance after the completion of the planning process for the Mary Davis Community Park ● Charleston County – greenbelt funding |

| Action 1.5: Develop and continue a community engagement process to decide design elements. | |
|---|---|
| What this is and why it is important | This action builds on Action 1.1 in that it seeks to not just identify key stakeholders but make sure to develop a process in the community for regular check ins so designs and developments can be vetted by residents. One idea was to have a follow-up event (or series of events) where at key stages the design and ideas should be rolled out and discussed with the community to make sure the park development and design process remain consistent with community input. The Local Foods, Local Places workshop was a starting point, but more conversations and meetings will be needed. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When a plan (or stages of the plan) is rolled out to the community ● When a site plan with community approval is adopted |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage community after Phase I and II environmental site assessments are complete. |

| Action 1.5: Develop and continue a community engagement process to decide design elements. | |
|---|--|
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC and CCRAB |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Calvary AME Church ● Union Heights community residents ● Accabee community residents ● Rosemont community residents |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People and time |
| Possible funding | |

Goal 2: Build on the opportunities presented by this park to increase and improve food access and equity in the Union Heights area.

Union Heights and its adjacent neighborhoods are considered food deserts where people are challenged by not having easy access to healthy food or grocery outlets. The park presents an opportunity to improve healthy food access and learning at the park itself and to focus on how the neighborhood overall could improve food access for its residents. The park design could include places for pop-up groceries, pop up markets, CSA drop off points, a farmers market, or community gardens. The actions below outline some steps to increase access to healthy food and improve health and wellness in the Union Heights area.

| Action 2.1: Create a one pager park vision that includes a food component. | |
|---|--|
| What this is and why it is important | This action is to develop a fact sheet that provides background, context, and plans for the park to be shared with food vendors and other food-related stakeholders identified in Action 2.2. The group hopes to use this to promote the park and solicit support. It would help provide uniform and consistent information to promote the park. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the one-pager is complete ● When the group is created |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By November 15th (6 weeks) |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Henrietta Woodward – LAMC Board member ● Chloe Stuber – College of Charleston ● Approved by LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ladrea Williams – Trident United Ways <lwilliams@tuw.org> |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Printing costs |
| Possible funding | |

| Action 2.2: Identify stakeholders related to food and create a stakeholder engagement plan. | |
|--|--|
| What this is and why it is important | Some workshop participants could help increase food access, such as the GrowFood Carolina hub and Low Country, Local First. But there are more people and organizations out there that could be involved in the process. This action would identify key food-related stakeholders and seek to engage them in a planning process for developing the food access and education component at the park and elsewhere in the neighborhood. Key stakeholders can be brought more into the conversation about food access and equity opportunities at the park. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the stakeholder plan is complete ● When a stakeholder committee is formed and its goals are defined |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conversations to start right away and will be on-going ● Have a plan by the end of January 2019 |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raheem Kareem – LAMC Board |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skip Mikell – Union Heights Council ● Fresh Future Farms ● GrowFood Carolina ● Low Country, Local First ● Low Country Street Grocery (mobile grocery operation, operates out of a school bus) |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Template for stakeholder engagement plan |
| Possible funding | |

| Action 2.3: Define specific programs and activities that could take place in or near the park. | |
|---|---|
| What this is and why it is important | This action would examine the needs and then focus on the specific activities and programs to implement in or near the park, e.g., farming, job training, gardens, farmers, and a market. Defining programming goals would highlight what is important now and help narrow the focus and scope of the park project. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the strategy is approved by the larger community |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Runs concurrent with Action 2.2 Needs to be part of on-going conversations with key food stakeholders. |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The stakeholder group (10-12 people) from Action 2.2. ● Ideally another strategic partner (from the supporting cast) will assume leadership for this action. |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC Board ● Fresh Future Farms ● GrowFood Carolina ● Low Country, Local First ● Low Country Street Grocery (mobile grocery operation, operates out of a school bus) |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People and time |
| Possible funding | |

| Action 2.4: Implement the programs and activities identified in Action 2.3 that have community support. | |
|---|---|
| What this is and why it is important | This action works toward creating a healthy community and provides access to quality food. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If more people have access to healthy food (number of participants, number of activities, lbs of food provided, etc). ● If more people are educated on healthy food options |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January 2020, or whenever the site is ready to be programmed, e.g., cleaned up. |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chair of the stakeholder group from Action 2.2. |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholder group from Action 2.2 ● LAMC Board ● Fresh Future Farms ● GrowFood Carolina ● Low Country, Local First ● Low Country Street Grocery (mobile grocery operation, operates out of a school bus) |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Farmacy ● Medical University of South Carolina ● Local hospitals and clinics ● LAMC |
| Possible funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer Grant |

Other Goal 2 actions identified but not detailed at the workshop:

- Build and implement community programming for an urban farm setting to include job training, food sovereignty, environmental stewardship, and providing good clean food.
- Examine existing models and build partnerships to implement and urban farm at the site.
- Contact the Health Department for a potential “WIC Bus” stop at the site (United Ways). The park could be a stopping point for the DEH to distribute healthy food using the WIC Bus.
- Hold food truck or mobile kitchen events at the park to promote healthy food, healthy choices, and healthy activities.

Goal 3: Understand and work to improve the connectivity, transportation, and mobility options for the site and the Union Heights Community.

Transportation, mobility, and connectivity were major topics of conversation at the workshop. This area of North Charleston is seeing new road building for improved port access, and transportation planning consultants are studying several of the area’s corridors. The Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments plans for a bus rapid transit line adjacent to Union Heights and the best alignment for the community was a major topic as well. Also discussed was the now vacant land of the former Exit 218 interchange owned by the South Carolina Department of Transportation. When it was installed in the 1960s it severed the southern few blocks of Union Heights from its larger northern half. On a neighborhood scale, transportation topics included how to get pedestrians across Meeting Street to the park safely, especially if bus rapid transit is located here. Internally to the neighborhood, many of the streets were designed long before the adoption of the automobile and are narrow. On-street parking reduces driving widths further. There is opportunity for wider connectivity via trails as the park is strategically located along trails planned by the Council of Governments and the county. Given the importance of transportation and mobility issues for the neighborhood and the park project specifically, the following actions were created to investigate future solutions with key actors and keep the momentum going.

| Action 3.1: Talk with the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the city of North Charleston about the Exit 218 opportunity. | |
|---|--|
| What this is and why it is important | Now that the Department of Transportation no longer needs the land once occupied by Exit 218, there is an opportunity to restore and re-connect Union Heights. LAMC informed the workshop participants that they have been in contact with local representatives, the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and the city of North Charleston to see what steps can be taken to restore this land to the city with stipulations that it be used for affordable senior housing and civic/public uses such as a park. This action would also support Goal 4 because it would return Union Heights to its original boundaries, rectifying the injustice that occurred in the 1960s by ensuring that seniors and residents would benefit from the new uses. This action would begin by sending a message that the land is not to be sold to developers, followed by efforts to advance LAMC’s and the community’s goals. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the former South Carolina Department of Transportation land is developed per the preferences and needs of Union Heights residents, such as affordable senior housing, and civic/public spaces. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Currently in progress ● Ongoing until success is possible |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC is currently in discussions with the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the city of North Charleston ● Charleston Moves, Co-Lead on this action with LAMC ● Jamie Hadley – Community First Land Trust |

Action 3.1: Talk with the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the city of North Charleston about the Exit 218 opportunity.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skip Mikell – Union Heights Council President ● Abraham Champagne – Clemson University, Resilient Urban Design <achampa@clemson.edu> ● Betsy LaForte and Jason Crowley – Coastal Conservation League ● Other organizations like the Charleston Natural History Society that might not be aware but could be interested in helping in this area ● Jessica Norris, to help brainstorm ideas and process with LAMC. ● Julie Hussey – local business owner, for civic communications ● The whole community |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People and time |
| Possible funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● South Carolina Association for Community Economic Development ● U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant funding ● Council of Development Finance Agencies ● Mary Babcock Foundation ● Impact Investment (Coastal Community Foundation) ● Banks ● Kendeda Fund ● Opportunity Zone funding |

Action 3.2: Employ traffic-calming strategies on Meeting Street to slow down traffic adjacent to the Mary Davis Community/Memorial Park.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| What this is and why it is important | <p>To get to the Mary Davis park site pedestrians need to safely cross Meeting Street. Traffic calming strategies are needed in this area to allow for safe crossing. One workshop participant emphasized that not one life should be lost accessing the park. Further, if this section of Union Heights develops into part of the neighborhood commercial core, with proper streetscaping, it could become a pleasant pedestrian environment for retail and shops alongside the new community gathering place at the park. Some traffic-calming design elements were discussed such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marked paving for pedestrians. ● Pedestrian crossing buttons with lighted beacons. ● Lights, signs, and other deterrents. ● Traffic tables or signage to slow traffic through this area. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety is key; we cannot lose a single life on the street. ● When Meeting Street is safe to cross and traffic calming measures are implemented. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conversations with the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the South Carolina Port Authority can begin immediately. |

Action 3.2: Employ traffic-calming strategies on Meeting Street to slow down traffic adjacent to the Mary Davis Community/Memorial Park.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC ● Charleston Moves, Co-Lead on this action with LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● William Hamilton – Best Friends of Low Country Transit, to be brought into the conversation ● Rodly Millet – Community liaison with South Carolina Department of Transportation ● Community First Land Trust ● College of Charleston, possibly for bike ped count support |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The time of advocates to ensure that development is done according to community priorities |
| Possible funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● South Carolina Department of Transportation ● Port Authority mitigation funds for streetscaping |

Action 3.3: Meet with Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments to reach a solution together that balances the goals of bus rapid transit with community concerns about noise, safety, and accessibility.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | The community wants Meeting Street to be pedestrian friendly and is concerned this goal does not align with the goals of bus rapid transit. The station on Stromboli Avenue can alternatively be reached via Spruill Avenue. This action would seek to talk to the key planners at the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments about shifting the route for Lowcountry Rapid Transit and finding the best alignment that serves the neighborhood. Other possible outcomes could be corridor studies for Stromboli Avenue, Meeting Street, and Spruill Avenue. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments officially amends the bus rapid transit plans to accommodate and support the park plan |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 months to have a meeting ● 3-6 months to officially amend the plan |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skip Mikell – Union Heights Council ● Omar Muhammad – LAMC ● Charleston Moves, Co-Lead on this action with LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Councilman Brown (city) and Councilman Darby (County) ● Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments ● Kathryn Basha, to reach out regarding the bus rapid transit plans |
| Costs/resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time to change the plan |
| Possible funding | |

Action 3.4: Talk with Charleston County Department of Parks and Recreation to connect this park plan with their plan.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | Any future park could become part of the larger parks and recreation plan and network of assets for Charleston County. This action would engage the county in conversations about the future of the park and integrating it into their plans and resources for maintenance and/or connection. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the meetings happen ● When coordination and inclusion of the plan happens |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a conversation within 3 weeks |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Omar Muhammad – LAMC, to contact them ● Katie Zimmerman – Charleston Moves, to make initial contact to get schematics |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● David Bennett – Head of Parks Commission ● Love and support of all involved |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time for leads to follow up |
| Possible funding | |

Action 3.5: Make sure that the port access road drainage does not run into the park.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | The port access overpasses currently have stormwater from the road surface draining directly underneath the overpass onto the ground below. In some cases, this could be directly on top of part of the Mary Davis park, a detriment to the health and safety of users in that part of the park. This action entails engaging with the necessary agencies and actors to see what measures could be taken to ensure runoff from the road does not contaminate the park and connecting with consultants for the Port (Seamon Whiteside: https://seamonwhiteside.com/) to see what the design elements are |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When measures installed |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As soon as possible: begin finding out who to reach and contact |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rodly Millet – Community liaison with South Carolina Department of Transportation ● Katie Zimmerman – Charleston Moves |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC ● Union Heights community ● CCRAB ● All port stakeholders |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May cost the South Carolina Department of Transportation to install diversion drains |
| Possible funding | |

GOAL 4: Be proactive about addressing environmental justice and equity concerns as new development happens and change occurs.

The local leadership in union heights, LAMC, CCRAB and the Union Heights Council, are all keenly aware of increasing development pressures given some changes in the port and the location of major new businesses to the nearby area. As land values increase, adjacent neighborhoods are seeing high-end residential and retail development occur. There is concern among Union Heights residents about displacement and gentrification. LAMC and others have been proactively tracking and voicing concerns about development proposals that run against the interests of residents. Change is going to happen in and around Union Heights, but to the extent that it can be done by taking into consideration resident concerns is a social justice issue that local leaders are focused on. Environmental justice concerns are air quality from the many busy roadways, as well as past environmental contamination from dumping on the park property itself. Another social justice concern is the poor performance of stormwater drains and aging infrastructure in this under-served community, which causes flooding if not maintained. It is difficult to determine the responsible party who would maintain the storm drains, i.e., the South Carolina Department of Transportation, the city of North Charleston, or Charleston County. This goal was part of the process to ensure that steps could continually be taken to address equity concerns, both social and environmental, for the people of Union Heights.

| Action 4.1: Research the steps that need to be taken to create an environmental protection overlay district (or other protective overlay district). | |
|--|--|
| What this is and why it is important | A variety of zoning tools can be used to provide protections for specific areas. Before forming a plan, research needs to be conducted to understand which protective overlay district would make the most sense and what steps need to be taken to make those changes to the zoning code. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conversations are held with individuals that have knowledge related to environmental protective overlay districts and other protective zoning tools. ● A specific plan is in place for what zoning policy will be pursued and specific steps required in the process. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By mid December 2018 |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consulting team (pending approval by CCRAB Board) overseen by CCRAB |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC ● Betsy LaForte – Coastal Conservation League <betsy@sccl.org> ● Zoning Study Project Advisory Board (Herbert Rahim, Skip Mikell, Councilman Michael Brown, Rodly Millet, Omar Muhammad) ● Dr. Kristen Naney, Dr. Sacoby Wilson, and Bria Dantzler |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coastal Conservation League, for human resources, knowledge ● Funding for consultants (already obtained) |
| Possible funding | |

Action 4.2: Complete GIS zoning mapping project to demonstrate disproportionate impact of industrial zoning on Union Heights and neighboring communities.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | This project would involve creating a series of maps to show the disproportionate impact of zoning changes (from residential/light commercial to industrial) on the community. Maps will help the community leaders to make a strong case for protections against future industrial and other types of development that would negatively impact the community and compromise other goals that are part of this action plan. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Series of maps completed and presented to residents, planning agencies, elected officials, and other key stakeholders. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By early-mid January |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting team (pending approval by CCRA Board) overseen by CCRA |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAMC Betsy LaForte – Coastal Conservation League <betsy@sccl.org> Zoning Study Project Advisory Board (Herbert Rahim, Skip Mikell, Councilman Michael Brown, Rodly Millet, Omar Muhammad) |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal Conservation League, for human resources, knowledge Funding for consultants (already obtained) |
| Possible funding | N/A |

Action 4.3: Develop a zoning plan for the overlay district that is created and informed by the community.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| What this is and why it is important | This action entails using results from the maps to develop a set of policy recommendations for the city of North Charleston and Charleston County that will provide protections against future industrial and other types of development that would negatively impact the community and compromise other goals that are part of this action plan. Policy recommendations may potentially also include the creation of a Planned Development District for Meeting Street along Union Heights. Ultimately the overlay district needs to be supported by the community to serve the community’s needs and preferences. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy recommendations have been informed by and approved by residents to provide protections against harmful development in the community and provide pathways for more community control over future development. Policy recommendations have been made and received by elected officials and planning agencies. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2018 - January 2019 (City of North Charleston will approve the new 10-year comprehensive plan in later spring 2019, but the “information gathering” portion of the planning process will end in mid-late January). |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting team (pending approval by CCRA Board) overseen by CCRA Zoning Study Project Advisory Board (Herbert Rahim, Skip Mikell, Councilman Michael Brown, Rodly Millet, Omar Muhammad) |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Betsy LaForte – Coastal Conservation League ● Abraham Champagne – Clemson University <achampa@clemson.edu> ● Charles – North Charleston Planning Department ● Charleston County Planning Commission ● Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments ● Calvary AME Church ● Union Heights Council |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Betsy LaForte – Coastal Conservation League, for human resources, technical support ● Funding for consultants (already obtained) |
| Possible funding | N/A |

Action 4.4: Form a Zoning Alert Action Committee.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| What this is and why it is important | This action entails forming a community working group to track development proposals and rezoning applications, be aware of conversation with city, and be on guard and aware of pending and future zoning changes. LAMC and CCRAb already undertake efforts to track zoning and development proposals but their efforts could be more successful with more support from community residents external stakeholders. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased engagement and consistent support from the community and stakeholders in blocking unwanted zoning changes ● Supporting proactive zoning protections that align with the developed plan |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By the culmination of the zoning study and plan creation |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCRAb and LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consulting team (pending approval by CCRAb Board) overseen by CCRAb ● Betsy LaForte – Coastal Conservation League <betsy@sccl.org> ● Zoning Study Project Advisory Board (Herbert Rahim, Skip Mikell, Councilman Michael Brown, Rodly Millet, Omar Muhammad) ● Leah Farrel – Preservation Society of Charleston |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time ● Potential payment for working group |
| Possible funding | Need to locate funding for long-term support of Zoning Alert Action Committee |

Other Goal 4 Actions brainstormed but not detailed

- Talk to CCRAb about getting air quality monitors installed at the future Mary Davis Park.

GOAL 5: Explore economic development, job opportunities, and training activities that can take place at or near the site.

| Action 5.1: Identify three training organizations with the capacity to work with underemployed and unemployed individuals (Turning Leaf, SC Works and Trident Literacy). | |
|--|---|
| What this is and why it is important | Residents in low-wealth communities have unique circumstances that have contributed to chronic underemployment and unemployment. These issues must be addressed before successfully placing individual on a site, e.g., confidence building, educational challenges, criminal record. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The recruitment of three organization to assist with the identification and placement of underemployed and unemployed individuals. |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January 2019 to March 2019 |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lowcountry Local First ● College of Charleston ● Turning Leaf ● SC Works ● Trident Literacy |
| Costs and/or resources needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People and time |
| Possible funding | |

| Action 5.2: Successfully recruit 12 underemployed and unemployed residents to participate in green job training associated with the development of the Mary Lee Davis Park. | |
|---|---|
| What this is and why it is important | The placement of low-wealth residents in jobs which pays a living wage changes the conditions of families which leads to healthy communities. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The placement of 12 residents |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● March 2019 to May 2019 |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SC Works |
| Costs and/or resources needed | TBD |
| Possible funding | TBD |

| Action 5.3: Develop a collaboration with the College of Charleston’s Sustainability Literacy Institute. | |
|---|--|
| What this is and why it is important | This action would expand collaboration and leverage local academic expertise and resources. |
| Measures of success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration with the College of Charleston |
| Timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January 2019 |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LAMC |
| Supporting cast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● College of Charleston |
| Costs and/or resources needed | TBD |
| Possible funding sources | TBD |

IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

North Charleston stakeholders are working to advance the goals and actions of this community action plan. Three post-workshop conference calls were held with the local steering committee and the technical assistance team. The action plan tables and a summary of the Mary Davis park design results were developed and shared with the whole team prior to October 23rd. The full report was shared prior to November 13th. A subcommittee met to complete the actions for goal 5. Everything was merged into one final report by the last call on November 27th. Below is some general feedback and a collection of updates received from the local committee at the three conference calls.

- LAMC and the steering committee heard from many in the community after the workshop who expressed appreciation for the format and the design processes of the event, noting they felt a safe space had been created for dialog.
- LAMC has been in contact with planners at Charleston County and the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments regarding the upcoming update to the comprehensive plan, as well as Union Heights revitalization plan and the Local Foods, Local Places goals and process. The contact has been positive, and county and regional planners are eager to have the participation of the area’s neighborhoods as part of their process which will include opportunities to speak about such things as future land use, zoning, transportation, and connectivity.
- Charleston Moves has also been in contact with Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments planners about the bus rapid transit routes through the area. They are still weighing alternatives, which include King Street. Charleston Moves is committed to helping the area neighborhoods work with the COG and other transportation planning agencies to advocate for locally supportive and beneficial projects.

- LAMC’s Environmental Working Group has been tasked by the board for tracking the implementation of this Local Foods, Local Places Community Action Plan. They are not the lead for everything, rather they are the coordinating body that will track progress and continually reach out to various parties to move forward.
- Going forward LAMC will need to work closely with the Calvary AME Church, the property owner. This will include many aspects of the park design and redevelopment, community involvement, and eventually a final decision by the Church senior leadership on approval of the redevelopment. This is an on-going need and will be coordinated closely with LAMC leadership.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Mary Davis Community Park Design Summary
- Appendix B – Workshop Sign-in Sheets
- Appendix C – Workshop Photo Album
- Appendix D – Community Data Profile
- Appendix E – Funding Resources
- Appendix F – Reference