





NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

THE MARSHALL-RIDLEY CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD WILL BE A CULTURALLY RICH, DIVERSE, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY WITH EXCELLENT BUSINESSES, SERVICES, AND SCHOOLS, AND SAFE STREETS FOR ALL MODES OF TRAVEL WITH CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT AND REGION.

GOALS

1. CONNECTIVITY
2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
3. NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH
4. SAFETY
5. SENSE OF PLACE



- Marshall-Ridley Choice Neighborhood
 - Southeast Community Corridor Redevelopment Area
 - Site Acquisitions & Major Development Opportunities
 - Recent Arts & Cultural Investments
 - RECENT INVESTMENTS
 - PLANNED INVESTMENTS
- MARSHALL-RIDLEY CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN INVESTMENTS**
- MRCN Proposed Housing Developments
 - Community Gardens, Parks, & Public Spaces
 - Enhanced Lighting
 - Expanded Access to Broadband Services (Free Wi-Fi)
 - Neighborhood Gateways
 - Seafood Market
 - Community Co-working/Makerspace
 - Bates Drive Pedestrian & Bike Path
 - Complete Streets
- EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES**
- Mural/Art Celebrating History & Culture
 - Branding/Banners on Jefferson Avenue
 - Park & Waterfront Improvements

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The MRCN has good bones. The SEC was designed with a street network arranged in a grid pattern, providing a pedestrian-scaled framework that supports a mixed-use, walkable community that embraces the principles of sustainable development. The Transformation Plan strategies aim to revitalize the once-thriving neighborhood by reconnecting residents to their community, the city, and the region.

The MRCN's transformation will embrace the community's rich culture and heritage to enhance and distinguish the neighborhood's character from others in Newport News and to support a strong sense of place.

The neighborhood will champion its past and existing assets to support local economic growth and increase its attractiveness.

There are several elements that contribute to resiliency in a community, beginning with a healthy, thriving population, and an equitable, diverse economy. Through the planning process, residents and community partners discovered that the neighborhood has many assets in place and resources (organizations, services and programs) to draw upon as it rebuilds, so that one day residents will once again feel hopeful and safe; porches will be filled with neighbors and laughter and song; main streets will be active well into the evening; the community will be reconnected to its history and waterfront; and the neighborhood will once again be the gateway to Newport News and a desirable place to live.

Developed from community input, quantitative and qualitative data, the Neighborhood Task Force rooted its vision in five overarching goals that weave together the goals of the Housing and People plans: improve access to better jobs and services, deconcentrate poverty, provide options for healthier lifestyles, create a safer neighborhood, and celebrate the area's rich culture and history.

NNRHA, the City, and all the partners have come together to align their resources to commit over \$143 million in neighborhood leverage to achieve the overarching goals.



DESIGNING WITH SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY IN MIND

The redevelopment of Ridley Place was designed to achieve the requirements of LEED for Neighborhood Development certification and to support the City’s resiliency efforts.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Sustainability and resiliency are two important terms in contemporary conversations about planning at any scale. Sustainability is a complex concept that in its simplest form involves striking a balance among societal (human) needs, economic prosperity, and environmental preservation. One of the most widely recognized definitions was developed by the World Commission on Environment and Development in its report, *Our Common Future*:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Thinking about the way we use our natural resources and making decisions to use them wisely not only conserves resources for those who follow us but also has the potential to increase the quality of our lives today. For example, designing communities with safe, pedestrian-friendly streets that enable you to walk to the grocery or hardware store reduces greenhouse gas emissions, encourages physical exercise, and even fosters quick conversations with your neighbors along the way. Locating development in existing cities and towns, on previously developed sites or infilling development on vacant lots conserves natural resources as well as the financial resources that would be required to install the necessary infrastructure.

You might wonder how the MRCN Transformation Plan is incorporating the principles of sustainable development. The redevelopment of Ridley Place was designed to achieve LEED for Neighborhood Development certification. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the most widely used series of green building rating systems in the world. Created by the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED provides a framework for healthy, highly efficient development that generates less waste, costs less to operate, and supports human health.

WHAT IS LEED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT?

LEED-ND goes beyond the building footprint to the neighborhood scale, integrating the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building. The LEED-ND rating system is divided into three categories:

- **Smart Location and Linkage** encourages locating development within or near existing communities and public transit, and avoiding critical resources such as wetlands, floodplains, and irreplaceable agricultural lands.
- **Neighborhood Pattern and Design** emphasizes walkable, compact development that is accessible and highly connected to services, a variety of housing types, public transit, quality public spaces, and recreational facilities.
- **Green Infrastructure and Buildings** optimizes energy performance and water use reduction, supports materials management, and promotes historic resource preservation and building reuse.

Additional incentives are built into the rating system to encourage innovation as well as regional priorities that address local challenges such as rainwater management or affordable housing. In order to become certified, projects must first meet a series of prerequisites. Points are then awarded to projects that meet or exceed specific design criteria in each of the categories listed above. Depending on the number of points achieved, projects earn a rating of either: Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum.

The design of Ridley Place's redevelopment meets all of the prerequisites for LEED-ND certification, including Smart Location, Wetland and Water Body Conservation, Floodplain Avoidance, Walkable Streets, Compact Development, Minimum Building Energy Performance, Indoor Water Use Reduction, and Construction Activity Pollution.

Under the category of Smart Location and Linkage, the plan for redevelopment would achieve points for Preferred Locations as an infill site that was previously developed. It would also qualify for Housing and Jobs Proximity based on the affordable residential component and location within a half mile of at least 221 jobs (the same number of dwelling units proposed). Other points in this category could be earned for protecting steep slopes and designing the site to avoid significant wildlife habitat, wetlands, and water bodies.

For the category of Neighborhood Pattern and Design, the redevelopment of Ridley Place would be eligible for points based on several design strategies that provide walkable streets, compact development, and a mixed-use neighborhood. The project would also score high for providing diverse housing types including affordable housing. Other relevant points that the project's

design would qualify include reduced parking footprint, access to public space and recreation facilities, tree-lined and shaded streetscapes, and local food production.

Regarding the Green Infrastructure and Buildings category, the Ridley Place redevelopment plan envisions the multi-family building and the senior building to be designed to meet LEED certification or an equivalent green building rating system. The buildings and site will also be designed to maximize energy-efficiency, reduce indoor and outdoor water consumption, manage rainwater on the site, and include/integrate a solid waste (recycling) program.

As envisioned, the plan would also qualify for regional priority credits including Rainwater Management, Heat Island Reduction, Housing and Jobs Proximity and Connected and Open Community.

To learn more about the sustainable design features of the proposed plan please see the LEED-ND analysis in the Appendices.

RESILIENCY

Threats of climate change, severe weather, and rapid urbanization continue to put pressure on cities and communities. Cities like Newport News are developing strategies and plans to adapt to these changing economic, social and physical conditions. Many of the principles of sustainable design as described above complement the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities and regions to build resiliency and mitigate the risks presented by these threats. Often interrelated and interdependent, these strategies strive to restore and maintain the functioning of natural systems, while preserving economic vitality, and also enhancing community livability.

TALKING ABOUT RESILIENCY

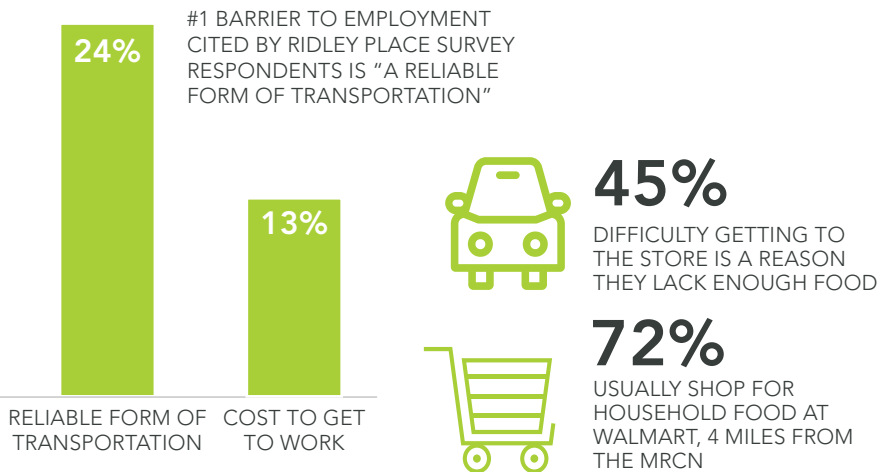
According to the American Planning Association, urban resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. Like illnesses, there are chronic stresses—high unemployment, poor or overtaxed infrastructure, water shortages—that weaken cities.

GOAL 1: CONNECTIVITY

Improve connectivity of the community to the larger region by increasing the number and frequency of transit options.

NEEDS & CHALLENGES

(Identified in the Needs Assessment Survey)



55% WOULD RIDE THE BUS MORE IF IT CAME MORE FREQUENTLY

52% WERE HAPPY WITH THE BUS NETWORK AND USE IT OFTEN

50% WOULD RIDE THE BUS MORE IF ROUTES WERE SHORTER

RIDLEY RESIDENTS THAT IDENTIFIED TRANSPORTATION AS THE #1 CHALLENGE IN THE MRCN

52% OF DISABLED RESIDENTS

60% OF SENIORS

32% SAID THAT IF TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM SCHOOL WAS PROVIDED THEY WOULD HAVE MORE TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN MORE ACTIVITIES AT THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL

29% SAID THAT THEIR CHILDREN DON'T PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO FAR OR THEY LACK TRANSPORTATION

OVERVIEW

Despite the MRCN's location next to a major interstate (I-664) and multiple bus routes serving the neighborhood, residents feel disconnected from other parts of the city and region. Throughout the planning process, residents repeatedly noted challenges in accessing basic services, employment, and schools. The connectivity goal aims to improve links between the community and essential services, employment opportunities, entertainment venues, neighborhood walkability, and other key elements that contribute to the overall quality of life in the community.

Residents identified a lack of reliable and convenient transportation options, particularly public transit, as the primary barrier they face when trying to find jobs, attend their children's after school activities, reach medical facilities, or visit a grocery store. The challenge of inadequate transit options is especially acute for residents living with disabilities and those over the age of 55. Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), the region's public transit provider, offers bus and paratransit services in the neighborhood, while many residents use ride-hailing services or relatives with cars to get to and from destinations.

Strategy A: Work with HRT to review stop locations, usage, frequency, ease of transfers, stop conditions, and revise them to increase ridership and connectivity to jobs, healthcare, services, and educational resources.

HRT is in the process of adopting a revised Transit Development Plan which addresses concerns raised by users and improves overall system performance, including modifications to the routes that serve the MRCN. At the same time, the City prepared a Bus Stop Policy that will be presented to City Council in the summer of 2018. Once adopted, bus stops within the MRCN that previously could not accommodate passenger amenities will be re-evaluated according to the new guidelines and standards to identify those stops that may now be eligible for passenger amenities.

WHAT IS A COMPLETE STREET?

Complete streets come in many forms and can contain any number of elements. A few examples include well-marked crosswalks and wide sidewalks for pedestrians; bike lanes and parking for cyclists; parallel parking for motor vehicles; lighting; and green infrastructure. Complete streets can encourage alternative modes of transportation, such as walking and biking. Well-designed complete streets improve an area's sense of place and the experience of those who use the street.



Strategy B: Increase transit options by installing bike trails and pedestrian paths in the community that connect to other parts of the city.

The City is responsible for installing bike trails and paths identified in the adopted Future Land Use and Transportation Plan that are located within the public right-of-way. Public outreach and engagement will be part of any future planning and design activities related to new bicycle and pedestrian trails and paths.

Strategy C: Introduce elements of Complete Streets into the neighborhood.

For those who prefer to walk or bike to destinations, an integrated network of Complete Streets will also be implemented over time to improve connections between community assets, perform traffic calming, and modernize the streetscape.

Priority will be placed on interconnected Complete Streets projects on two street segments to address the concerns of residents. These include on 16th Street between Jefferson Avenue and Marshall Avenue as well as the entire length of Ivy Avenue from 20th Street to Hampton Roads Harbor.

While the community has identified speeding on one-way streets as a major concern, traffic data does not support the perception that MRCN streets have higher instances of speeding or collisions. Each one-way street has traffic-calming measures in place, including on-street parking, low speed limits, and frequent traffic signals, all of which contribute to very low traffic and pedestrian incidents in the neighborhood. The perception of speeding, however, may be addressed with the introduction

of Complete Streets elements including enhanced crosswalks. Solutions that may be considered include improved signage and lighting at crossings and stamped crosswalks.

Strategy D: Develop Bates Drive into a multi-modal trail connecting the Ridley Place site to King-Lincoln Park and the waterfront.

The connection is envisioned as a safe, well-lit pedestrian/bike trail that is open and accessible to the entire neighborhood.

These strategies will be supported by an effort to expand the Safe Routes to School Program, which will focus on connectivity and safety for children attending the schools in the MRCN. Further, one of the strategies from the People Plan is to establish a pick-up and delivery service in partnership with a local market to serve the neighborhood, thereby reducing the challenge of accessing a grocery store.

METRICS

Quantitative progress will be tracked through HRT ridership numbers, pedestrian and cycling traffic, and the length of Complete Streets treatment installed starting with Ivy Avenue and 16th Street. To assess how these changes are impacting residents, an annual community transit survey will be conducted in conjunction with HRT to determine if users are experiencing improved service. The City also will conduct Student Travel Tallies and Parent Surveys to assess the effectiveness of the Safe Routes to School Program within MRCN. The Department of Engineering will continue to track traffic accidents and fatalities in the neighborhood.

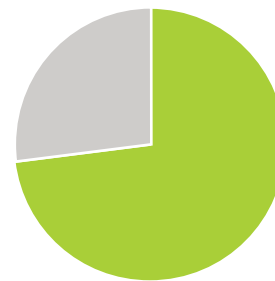
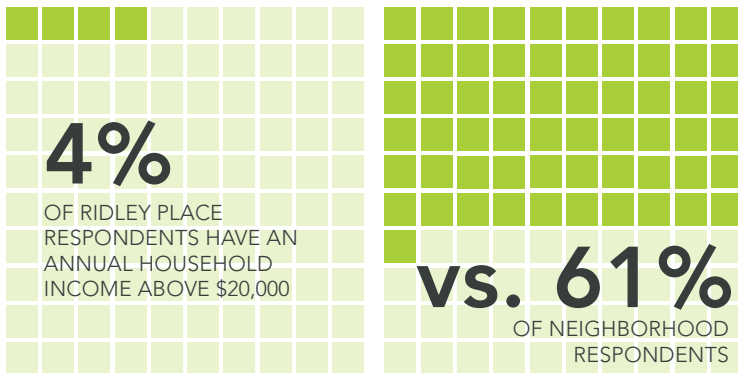
GOAL 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Foster economic development along Jefferson Avenue to create a vibrant commercial corridor, supporting locally-owned and operated businesses.

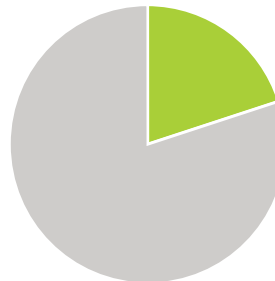
NEEDS & CHALLENGES

(Identified in the Ridley Place Needs Assessment Survey)

11% OF RIDLEY RESPONDENTS ARE EMPLOYED FULL-TIME



73%
OF MRCN RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE A GREATER RANGE OF RESTAURANTS, SHOPS, AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



20%
OF RIDLEY PLACE RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO LEARN HOW TO START A BUSINESS

OVERVIEW

The MRCN Market Study shows significant demand for neighborhood stores and services, particularly restaurants and personal care stores. There is limited demand for “big box” stores and other retailers. Therefore, this goal focuses on fostering economic development along Jefferson Avenue to create a vibrant commercial corridor, supporting locally-owned and operated businesses, and making the community a more inviting place to visit. Leveraging recent investments along Jefferson Avenue including streetscape, roadway, and utility improvements as well as the momentum at Brooks Crossing, the historic Lower Jefferson Avenue commercial corridor will be re-established and its connection to Downtown strengthened to draw residents and visitors into the MRCN. As part of Downtown Reimagined, the 28th Street Bridge will be transformed into a more pedestrian friendly link between the MRCN and Downtown.

This effort will be supported by the construction of mixed-use residential buildings on Jefferson

Avenue on currently vacant parcels as part of replacement housing component of the Housing Plan. With ground-floor retail or commercial space and parking in the rear, these buildings will not only provide housing options for a variety of income levels, but also fill in the gaps along the street front to improve the corridor’s sense of place.

It is anticipated that the forthcoming Brooks Crossing office building housing 600 Newport News Shipbuilding technology workers at the Brooks Crossing development will increase economic activity within the Brooks Crossing development and along the Jefferson Avenue commercial corridor. The EDA will lease approximately 15,000 SF of space within the building for workforce training opportunities, STEM education, and development activities.

At the same time, the City and EDA are actively engaging with the small business community. The City and EDA will leverage existing business assistance programs and tools, as well as partner

with supporting organizations, to provide small businesses and entrepreneurs the resources they need to be successful. A future co-working space and the workforce training space at Brooks Crossing will serve as hubs within the community for this outreach and assistance, which will help enhance the neighborhood's economic base.

Phase I of the Choice Neighborhood replacement housing, along the intersection of Jefferson Avenue and 28th Street, is anticipated to incorporate commercial/retail space on the first floor of multi-story residential buildings, which will provide additional locations for business operations while increasing business density in proximity to residential areas. In addition, the City is creating the co-working space at 2506 Jefferson Avenue to help support existing businesses and new business opportunities by providing business owners and entrepreneurs a place to operate, network and share innovative ideas. The co-working space will be at a central and convenient location within the neighborhood at which business assistance-related service delivery can be provided by the City, EDA and partner organizations, including the Small Business Development Center. The City and EDA intend to extend support services to residents of the MRCN, as well as the broader SEC, to support and enhance the small business community.

Strategy A: Increase the number of new businesses opening and operating along Jefferson Avenue.

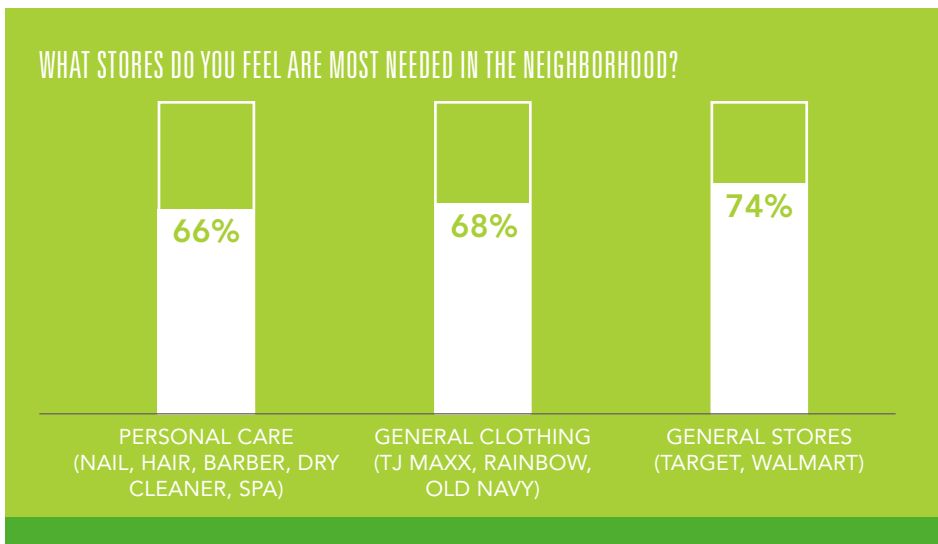
This strategy will involve the following activities:

- Identify service and retail business needs within the community and pursue potential prospects to address community needs.
- Establish a small business initiative internal working group through the City's EDA, comprised of business owners and citizens, to provide feedback to staff.
- Leverage and make more accessible existing business development programs and incentives, including those available through the Enterprise Zone Program, Opportunity Zone Program, Tourism Zone Program and small business loan programs.
- Strengthen marketing efforts in the area and encourage more word-of-mouth advertising of existing small business development services.

- Work with property owners through existing incentive programs, including the Commercial Rehabilitation Property Tax Abatement Program and the Façade Improvement Grant Program, to increase the quantity and improve the quality of commercial spaces available to businesses.
- Connect small businesses and entrepreneurs with small business resources such as the Small Business Development Center.
- Continue to explore options for the redevelopment of the site of the former Harbor Homes and Dickerson Courts. Although the site is not suitable for new housing units, it provides an excellent opportunity to attract businesses to Jefferson Avenue and create jobs for MRCN residents.

Strategy B: Increase the number of Ridley Place residents employed locally in the neighborhood.

- Engage community partners and service providers to conduct a skills assessment evaluation of Ridley Place residents to assist in the development of training programs to improve job readiness.
- Initiate conversations and secure commitments within the local business community to provide jobs/apprenticeships to Ridley Place residents and residents within MRCN.
- Engage community partners and service providers to conduct capacity building workshops for Ridley Place residents.



- Continue to market the Summer Training Enrichment Program (STEP) to young residents of Ridley Place to grow workplace skills and build capacity.

Strategy C: Establish a co-working/makerspace and business incubator.

This project provides space for small businesses and new entrepreneurs to obtain technical assistance, business management workshops, and expert advice on various topics including business planning, industry research, accounting, and capital sources.

Services will be provided at no cost to help MRCN residents start and expand their businesses in a high-quality, connected workspace that fosters innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit. This space will have a convenient location that is walkable for neighborhood residents and accessible to business partners and clients.

Strategy D: Improve communications and outreach for existing job training and workforce readiness programs.

- Strengthen relationships with Peninsula Council for Workforce Development and Goodwill in order to develop ways to better market their services.
- Partner with Peninsula Council for Workforce Development to utilize their Peninsula Worklink program to determine employer needs and help promote job fairs when appropriate.
- Engage local education partners, including Old Dominion University and Thomas Nelson Community College, to market and tailor job training and workforce readiness programs to MRCN residents.
- Collaborate with existing workforce readiness and job training service providers to offer services within MRCN, making programming more accessible to residents.



Strategy E: Focus existing Façade Improvement Grant Program outreach efforts on the neighborhood.

- Help eligible business owners restore, sustain, and improve their commercial properties along Jefferson Avenue and at other key sites in the MRCN.
- Utilize the Façade Improvement Grant Program to improve the commercial properties within MRCN in order to not only benefit aesthetics, but also improve the quality of the commercial building inventory.
- Leverage this program to support business and property owners making investments to their properties.
- Conduct targeted marketing to eligible property owners to expand awareness of the program and provide technical assistance in the application stage as needed.
- Expand awareness of the program through City functions and activities, including those by Planning, Engineering, Development and Codes Compliance.

Strategy F: Expand access to broadband services.

This project will identify options to introduce low or no-cost broadband access in new housing complexes and public spaces, thereby increasing the number of residents who are connected to employment training resources and opportunities, as well as health and other services, and the number of students who can access the internet for educational purposes at home.

Strategy G: Develop a semi-covered pavilion for use as a seafood/farmer's market and a separate community kitchen.

This project will address resident concerns by increasing access to fresh seafood and produce as well as providing commercial space to local fisherman, farmers, and other related vendors to sell their goods while supporting a major neighborhood asset, the Seafood Industrial Park.

The community kitchen will provide neighborhood food service and catering entrepreneurs the capacity to scale up their businesses and contribute to the local food community.

In addition, this project will attract customers from outside the neighborhood with a creative, place-based culinary destination.

The City's Department of Development and the EDA will take the lead in developing the plan for the seafood/farmer's market. It is envisioned that the market will be located along lower Jefferson Avenue near the Seafood Industrial Park. This project is expected to provide employment opportunities to MRCN residents.

Strategy H: Expand owner-occupied residential stabilization, accessibility, and weatherization programs.

Stabilizing the neighborhood's existing single-family housing stock will reinforce the goals of the Housing Plan by helping to eliminate blight, improving neighborhood property values, and promoting a more stable housing market.

Two programs administered by NNRHA in the MRCN will be expanded to meet the needs of homeowners: Emergency Repair and Open House Rehabilitation.

The Open House Rehabilitation Program provides financial assistance to make homes more accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The Emergency Repair Program provides renovations for income-eligible owner occupants with grants or low interest loans to address roofing and plumbing emergencies.

The primary barrier to participation in the owner-occupied residential stabilization programs is a lack of awareness. Residents who have participated or attempted to participate in various programs repeatedly cite the complex process, poor customer service experiences, and a lack of consistency as the reasons why they have not been successful in taking advantage of the programs. In order to increase participation, the City, NNRHA, and HRCAP will coordinate their outreach efforts and, where possible, streamline the process to improve the experience of and participation in weatherization and stabilization initiatives with the ultimate goal of helping residents remain in their homes and continue to contribute to the neighborhood.

METRICS

Economic development progress will be measured by the number of residents participating in the small business incubator and entrepreneur programming, the number of graduates from training programs, and the number of Ridley Place residents who successfully secure small business loans and establish new businesses in the neighborhood.

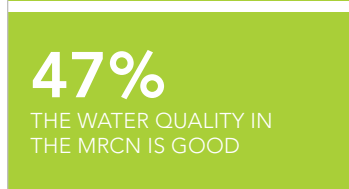
GOAL 3: NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH

Build upon the neighborhood’s waterfront location and porch-friendly character to make the community greener, more walkable and welcoming, energy efficient, and resilient.

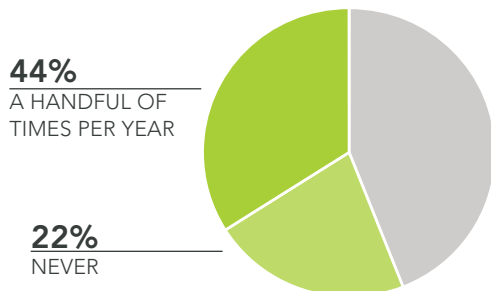
NEEDS & CHALLENGES

(Identified in the Needs Assessment Survey)

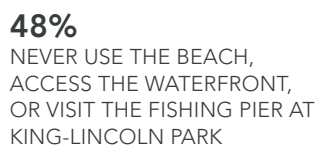
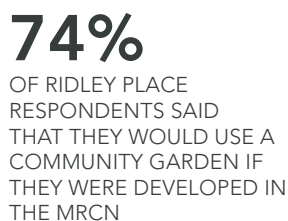
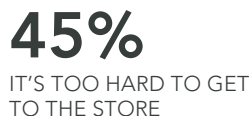
RIDLEY PLACE SURVEY RESPONDENTS DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT



HOW OFTEN DID RIDLEY PLACE RESPONDENTS VISIT KING-LINCOLN PARK?



RIDLEY PLACE SURVEY RESPONDENTS CITE THE FOLLOWING REASONS FOR A HOUSEHOLD LACK OF FOOD



OVERVIEW

Similar to many communities with low economic opportunities and limited quality housing options, MRCN residents live with chronic health challenges, limited access to green space and recreational amenities, and few opportunities to live a healthy lifestyle. The City acknowledges residents’ concerns about environmental and health impacts of the nearby coal terminal and is committed to working with the terminal and pier operators to explore business improvements to complement environmental regulatory compliance.

The neighborhood health goal builds upon the neighborhood’s waterfront location and porch-friendly character to make the community greener, more walkable and welcoming, and more energy efficient through building design and landscape features that incorporate stormwater infrastructure and resiliency.

Neighborhood health will be improved through place-based projects that improve walkability, access to fresh food, and recreational options.

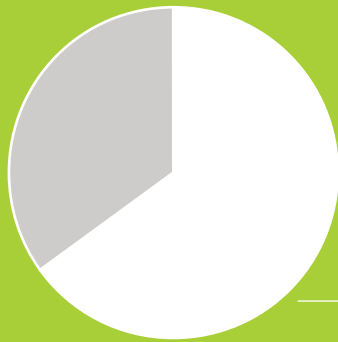
Strategy A: Develop Bates Drive into a multi-use trail connecting the Ridley Place site to King-Lincoln Park and the waterfront, while providing a safe, well-lit pedestrian/bike trail that is open and accessible to the entire neighborhood.

Strategy B: Improve sidewalks and bike lanes on those streets undergoing Complete Streets treatment will also make it easier for residents to safely walk and bicycle through the neighborhood.

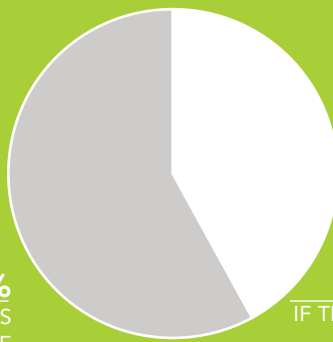
Strategy C: Establish community gardens at Ridley Place.

Approximately 54 percent of MRCN residents live below the poverty line and food insecurity is a challenge.

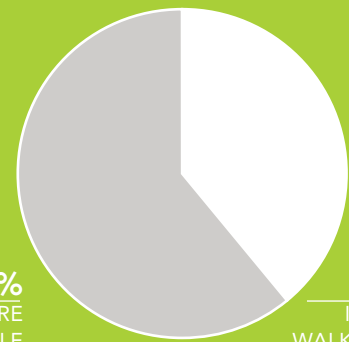
WHAT WOULD MAKE RIDLEY PLACE RESPONDENTS MORE LIKELY TO EXERCISE?



65%
IF THERE WAS
A GYM IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD



42%
IF THEY FELT MORE
COMFORTABLE
WALKING AROUND
THE MRCN



39%
IF THERE WERE
WALKING/RUNNING
PATHS NEAR THEIR
HOME

This project will dedicate space within Ridley Place to fully-support community gardens with water irrigation, supply storage, and a resident-led co-operative to oversee operations and plot management.

Strategy D: Break down the superblock-scale to make the neighborhood more pedestrian-oriented.

The design of Ridley Place will break down the superblock-scale of the existing development and reconnect streets, encouraging more foot traffic and eyes on the street. Improved sidewalks and bike lanes on those streets undergoing Complete Streets treatment will also make it easier for residents to safely walk and bicycle through the neighborhood.

The installation of pedestrian-scale lighting on neighborhood streets will improve the feeling of safety, especially in areas that currently feel threatening, and encourage residents to walk.

The People Plan also includes strategies to improve health, including a neighborhood gym and a pick-up and delivery service in partnership with a local market to serve the neighborhood.

METRICS

Neighborhood health progress will be measured by monitoring baseline health indicators as well as through an annual survey that measures perceptions of the neighborhood's green spaces, air quality, recreational opportunities, access to affordable fresh food, and overall quality of life.



Restoring the pedestrian scale of the neighborhood and reconnecting streets will encourage more foot traffic.



Bates Drive is envisioned as a multi-use trail connecting Ridley Place to King-Lincoln Park and the waterfront.

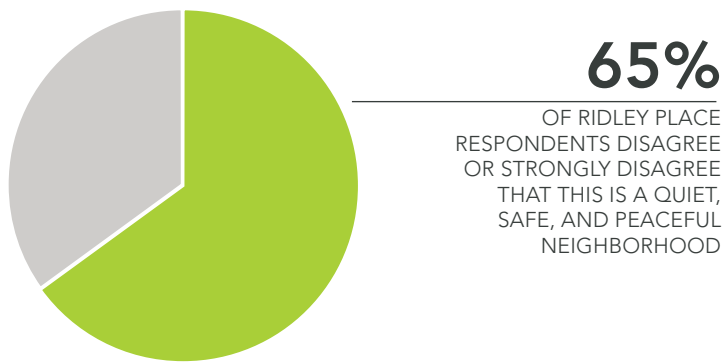
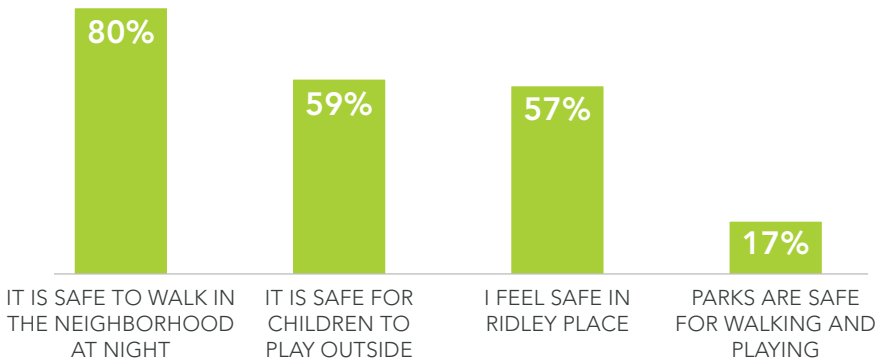
GOAL 4: SAFETY

Create an environment that is welcoming, peaceful, and safe so that residents and visitors feel at ease walking throughout the neighborhood.

NEEDS & CHALLENGES

(Identified in the Needs Assessment Survey)

RIDLEY PLACE SURVEY RESPONDENTS DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT



RIDLEY PLACE SURVEY RESPONDENTS BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING ARE PROBLEMS IN THE MRCN



OVERVIEW

Ridley Place and neighborhood residents and youth consistently expressed concern about the safety of the MRCN for themselves and their families. While the number of Part 1 Violent Crimes in the neighborhood has actually decreased over the past decades, there have been spikes in some types of offenses, with the overall rate of incidents per 1,000 residents remaining steady for the past 5 years. With a criminal incident rate of 14.34 per 1,000 people in 2016, the MRCN rate is more than three times that of the citywide rate of 4.61 per 1,000. To further complicate the situation, there is a general perception in the neighborhood, and beyond, that public safety in the MRCN is a greater risk than anywhere else in the region, which appears to impede the ability to attract new capital and dissuade businesses from opening new stores or providing services in the neighborhood.

The high level of violent and non-violent crime incidents in the neighborhood is causing residents to feel unsafe walking/exercising in the neighborhood, or letting their children play outside. A lack of pedestrian-scale lighting, perceived speeding on one-way and neighborhood streets, and poor maintenance of vacant lots and property fence lines all contributed to the overall feeling of unease. While residents noted that the Newport News Police Department (NNPD) had improved community outreach, they acknowledged that there are still opportunities to improve community-police relationships and shared trust.

A goal of the Newport News Police Department's C.R.I.M.E ("Creating Responsibility In My Environment") Program is to establish and maintain positive partnerships between the community and police. There must be a strong and collaborative relationship between the community and the police to both reduce crime and the perception of crime. Across Newport News, residents, other community stakeholders, and NNPD are concentrating on strengthening relationships through participation, partnership, and communication. Together, they are creating more positive perceptions of law enforcement. The MRCN will build on the existing program to strengthen relationships between the police and neighborhood.

Youth should feel safe walking around and playing in the neighborhood, day and night. They should have the opportunity to thrive in their community without the constant threat of violence and other criminal activity. Actions will be taken to address these ongoing safety concerns, including strengthening existing and establishing new Neighborhood Watch Groups, installation of improved lighting at key locations, and the continued implementation of substance abuse prevention programs and strategies that address violence prevention, intervention, treatment, and re-entry. The Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Initiative (Office of the City Manager) will continue to actively market and recruit youth in the SEC for STEP, with the goal of engaging 50 youth each summer from the MRCN.

STEP is one component of Building Better Futures, the City's Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Initiative to increase positive outcomes for youth and young adults in the community between the ages of 16 to 24 through exposure to the world of work. The 10-week program is designed to provide participants with meaningful work readiness training, paid experience at a partner worksite, GED preparation, transportation assistance, and end-of-program transitioning assistance for out-of-school youth.

As part of the transformation of the MRCN, substance abuse and violence prevention education will be expanded to educate neighborhood youth about risks and consequences and promote healthy alternatives to risky and criminal behavior.

The intent of the safety goal is to create an environment that is calm, safe, and welcoming so that residents and visitors of all ages feel at ease throughout the neighborhood, which will lead to a reduction

in neighborhood stigma and improved business investment. Due to the complex nature of safety, multiple projects will work together to help improve residents' lives. Additional information is provided in the MRCN Public Safety Strategy, which builds upon the prevention, intervention, enforcement, and re-entry initiatives already being implemented citywide.

Strategy A: NNPd will expand existing programs operating in the neighborhood to have an immediate impact on neighborhood safety.

- Many of the no-cost and low-cost strategies are captured in the Public Safety Strategy including actions to address community maintenance concerns including expanding the Adopt-A-Spot Program, conducting Business Security Surveys, and employing Crime Prevention Security Assessments and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) for new developments.

Strategy B: Engage Public Housing Complexes in Crime Prevention.

- The NNPd & NNRHA will partner with residents at the three public housing complexes in the MRCN to resolve neighborhood concerns and enhance the quality of life in multiple family complexes throughout the neighborhood.
- Officers will be assigned as tenant council liaisons for Ridley Place, Marshall Courts, and Lassiter Courts, and will work with tenant council leaders to establish an agenda and talking points for each tenant council meeting.



NNPD was an integral team member of the planning process.

Strategy C: Conduct Neighborhood Lighting Assessment and implement immediate repairs and improvements at major intersections and along neighborhood streets, as well as develop a comprehensive lighting plan for the MRCN.

- The installation of pedestrian-scaled lighting along key neighborhood streets and in public spaces, especially around Ridley Place, coupled with enhanced street lighting at key intersections throughout the MRCN will improve the perception of safety and the ability of emergency services to respond to calls for services and monitor streets while on patrol.
- This project will help reinforce the Housing Plan by enlivening the neighborhood streets and changing the perception of safety.

Strategy D: Establish Neighborhood Watch Groups.

Establish and maintain Neighborhood Watch Groups at Ridley Place, Marshall Courts, and Lassiter Courts and adjacent areas to create safer streets and homes, encourage more collaborative relationships among residents, and build community spirit.

The neighborhood watch program helps residents protect their homes and neighborhood by introducing information and basic safety tips that can prevent crime and keep everyone more secure.

Strategy E: Implement Complete Streets.

Improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists by implementing elements of Complete Streets, particularly on Ivy Avenue and 16th Street.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to ensure that all users—pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders—are able to travel safely, regardless of mode of transportation, age, or ability.

Strategy F: Create Safe Routes to School.

Expand and Enhance the Safe-Routes-to-School Program and empower residents to participate in implementing the program.

This program has been active in Virginia since 2007. It helps communities and schools encourage walking and biking to school and make the activities safe and more convenient.

A key first action will be to improve school bus stop safety with lighting and other amenities, particularly in fall and winter months when middle and high-school students wait in the dark.

Strategy G: Clean and Beautify Neighborhood.

Introduce, support, and carry out the Adopt-A-Spot Program in the MRCN to contribute to a healthier and cleaner environment that discourages illegal activity and strengthens community pride.

Litter and illegal dumping are concerns for the neighborhood, based on extensive feedback during community engagement activities and results of the community survey.

Rental property owners are encouraged to properly maintain their properties through the City's Residential Rental Inspection Program. Initiated in October 2016, the program requires owners of residential rental property to obtain and permit inspection of their dwelling units. The program is meant to ensure that rental properties are maintained in a safe, decent, and sanitary manner consistent with the requirements of the Virginia Maintenance Code. The City began implementing the program in the southern part of the city, including the MRCN, in 2017.

Strategy H: Secure Businesses and Commercial Corridor.

Stabilize and secure existing buildings and fence-lines, beginning with those that are publicly owned and maintained.

Work with business owners to assess their properties and identify actions to reduce the incidence of offenses. Methods that may be used include but are not limited to Crime Prevention Security Assessments and CPTED.

Strategy I: Anti-Litter Campaign.

Create litter awareness and educate residents of all ages to reduce waste in public spaces and improve the physical appearance of the neighborhood.

Work with youth and community organizations to develop the anti-litter campaign.

In addition to neighborhood clean-ups and increased information campaigns to reduce litter and curbside dumping, the interdepartmental Neighborhood Enforcement Action Team (N.E.A.T.) will play a key role in identifying and addressing



Neighborhood clean up events reinforce a sense of community and pride.

high litter properties throughout the MRCN and identifying any additional actions that may be taken in the public right-of-way. The team comprises representatives from the Office of the City Manager, NNPD, Codes Compliance, Fire Marshall's Office, and Public Works who go out into the community on a weekly basis and conduct foot patrols to examine issues and concerns some neighborhoods are having. N.E.A.T. takes a comprehensive look at quality of life issues in neighborhoods and offers solutions to residents who are impacted, providing them with information and literature on how they can get involved in helping resolve issues.

METRICS

Quantitative measures will include the number of calls for service; crime rates; pedestrian and bicycling activity; street lights repaired, replaced, or newly installed; and the number of vehicle-involved accidents or speeding violations.



Reducing crime in the MRCN requires community-wide collaboration.

GOAL 5: SENSE OF PLACE

Embrace the community’s culture and heritage to enhance and distinguish the neighborhood’s character and establish a sense of place. The neighborhood will champion its past and existing assets to support local economic growth and increase the area’s attractiveness.

NEEDS & CHALLENGES

(Identified in the Needs Assessment Survey)



10%

OF MRCN SURVEY RESPONDENTS REPORTED HAVING DIFFICULTY AFFORDING REPAIRS AND UPKEEP OF THEIR HOMES

OVERVIEW

During the team’s site visit to transformed neighborhoods in Charlotte, NC, MRCN residents kept saying, “I can’t believe how clean it is here.” Trash, crumbling fences, and overgrown landscaping at Ridley Place and in the surrounding neighborhood all have negative impacts on the overall perception of the quality of life in the neighborhood. These challenges are signals to outsiders that the neighborhood is not being invested in or maintained, which reinforces negative perceptions of the community. MRCN residents are proud of the neighborhood’s African-American culture and history and yearn to restore the community as a thriving, highly desirable, and distinctive community.

The MRCN’s rich cultural and artistic heritage will be reflected in the neighborhood’s rebranding and will build upon the excellent work of current cultural programming centers located within the community. The Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center, Pearl Bailey Library, C. Waldo Scott Center for H.O.P.E., and several smaller museums have all committed to being a part of the transformation of the neighborhood and strengthening their current cultural programming. Further, the improvements at King-Lincoln Park and the construction of a seafood

market will attract residents to the neighborhood and provide opportunities to share the unique story of the MRCN.

The waterfront is a central part of the MRCN and a core component of the community’s transformation. Currently, there is not sufficient wayfinding signage to encourage increased use of King-Lincoln Park and other amenities on the water. As part of the neighborhood re-branding exercises currently underway as an early action activity, the waterfront will be highlighted through improved wayfinding and increased programming at King-Lincoln Park.

Strategy A: Enhance neighborhood gateways.

This project will build upon the early action activity of designing a logo and banners for the Jefferson Avenue Corridor to help brand and market the MRCN and help improve the negative perception of the neighborhood.

Gateway signs and murals will provide a visual cue to drivers and pedestrians that they are entering a unique neighborhood, while helping create pride of ownership for residents, and conveying that the MRCN is a high-quality place to live, work, shop, and play.

Residents will work with the Department of Planning and the Newport News Green Foundation (Green Foundation) to oversee design and placement of the gateway signs and work with volunteers from partner organizations to prepare areas for installation.

Gateway signs will be placed at two entrances to the neighborhood: 39th Street and Marshall Avenue and 14th Street and Jefferson Avenue.

A mural designed by a local artists and painted in part by neighborhood youth will be located at the gateways.

This project supports the Housing Plan by improving public perception of the MRCN and promoting residents sense of community pride.

Strategy B: Improve access to and the condition of King-Lincoln Park and the waterfront.

This project will enhance King-Lincoln Park and the waterfront by implementing physical improvements that define and strengthen beach access and promote park assets and activities.

The Early Action Activity will build on improvements to the park by formalizing beach access and adding signs within the park that direct visitors to a largely unknown asset.

Subsequent improvements within the park will be based on a community-driven planning effort to reimagine park elements and address resident's desire to see more youth-friendly features including water play activities.

Strategy C: Build a semi-covered seafood market to support local fisherman with an adjacent community kitchen.

This project will address resident concerns by increasing access to fresh seafood and produce as well as providing commercial space to local fishermen, farmers, and other related vendors to sell their goods while supporting a major neighborhood asset, the Seafood Industrial Park.

The community kitchen will provide neighborhood food service and catering entrepreneurs the capacity to scale up their businesses and contribute to the local food community.

In addition, this project will attract customers from outside the neighborhood with a creative, place-based culinary destination.

Strategy D: Expand owner-occupied residential stabilization, accessibility, and weatherization programs.

Stabilizing the neighborhood's existing single-family housing stock will reinforce the goals of the Housing Plan by helping to eliminate blight, improving neighborhood property values, and promoting a more stable housing market.

Two programs administered by NNRHA in the MRCN will be expanded to meet the needs of homeowners: Emergency Repair and Open House Rehabilitation.

The Open House Rehabilitation Program provides financial assistance to make homes more accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The Emergency Repair Program provides renovations for income-eligible owner occupants with grants or low interest loans to address roofing and plumbing emergencies.



Celebrating the MRCN's natural, historical and cultural elements will enhance the community's sense of place.



Strategy E: Hold quarterly clean-up events at Ridley Place and adjacent neighborhood streets to reduce litter and improve neighborhood appearance.

METRICS

Although a sense of place can be difficult to quantify, a biennial survey will track how residents feel about their neighborhood as projects are rolled out through the implementation process. Measuring the number of residents and partners involved in neighborhood programs will highlight citizen engagement and commitment to neighborhood change. This commitment can take the form of the number of maintenance calls to City departments, participation in community clean up days, and the number of active Neighborhood Watch Groups.

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES

We've been busy planning, but that hasn't stopped us from rolling up our sleeves to make change happen now.

OVERVIEW

There is no time to waste. As part of the planning process, the Early Action Activities Subcommittee identified three projects to take the first steps toward implementation of the Transformation Plan. These activities entail physical improvements to the neighborhood and will be carried out in 2018 to build momentum and accelerate transformation.

1. **King-Lincoln Park and Waterfront Restoration**
2. **Neighborhood Branding**
3. **Celebrating the Arts**

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY #1: King-Lincoln Park and Waterfront Restoration

Improving access to and the condition of King-Lincoln Park and its waterfront is a priority for the MRCN, not only to meet recreational needs but to acknowledge and celebrate local history.

Originally the site of a World War I installation, the site became a waterfront recreation area known as Pinkett's Beach that was frequented by the city's African-American community. Mr. Pinkett was an African-American tailor, who opened his property to residents in the surrounding community who had few other options, eventually providing a boarding house, beach, and boat house, restaurant, barber shop, and entertainment stage. Pinkett's Beach became the first interracial beach in the area after segregation ended. Many of the area's large community churches used the beach for baptisms. The beach was reacquired by the military for World War II and conveyed to the City of Newport News thereafter; it was officially dedicated as Lincoln Park in 1968 and renamed in 1984.

King-Lincoln Park is underutilized, with most visits occurring during weekends in the warmer months. Special events are held at the park, mostly centered on music programs and picnics. The park would benefit from a number of interventions to attract more residents and increase usage. The long-term vision is to expand the open space within the park and passive recreation opportunities along the water, ultimately connecting to nearby Anderson Park.

The Early Action Activities Subcommittee determined that the primary focus of the King-Lincoln Park and Waterfront Restoration is to increase public access to the waterfront. While the beach has severely eroded over the decades and is often covered with debris, it is an area that is still used by waders and other beachgoers during the summer. It is not, however, an area that is accessible to anyone who may have mobility



issues. Overgrown vegetated areas and limited lighting and signage further make the beach undetectable.

The project scope calls for construction of a boardwalk from the park to the beach, maintenance of the vegetated dunes, and enhanced lighting and signage.

This will help restore community pride, provide better access to all people and create a destination for people both in and around the neighborhood.

Community Building

The project design reflects the community's vision and will be implemented with residents' support and involvement. A community event will be scheduled to clean up the beach in conjunction with construction of the boardwalk. Community events occurring at King-Lincoln Park will allow for continued social cohesion long after the project is implemented.

Outcomes

Implementation of this early action will provide a clean and accessible park and waterfront that once again will be a celebrated neighborhood asset. Success will be measured through park usage, including number of people and events.

Project Schedule

Boardwalk design and permitting: 1-3 months

Beach cleanup: May/June 2018

Boardwalk built: 3 months

Boardwalk dedication: August 2018



EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY #2: Neighborhood Branding

The purpose of Neighborhood Branding is to improve the neighborhood's image and promote it as a positive experience to both residents and visitors. Many of the positive elements of a neighborhood brand have been identified through the planning process and can be used as a starting point to develop a brand promise and subsequent marketing messages.

Both tangible and emotional benefits are anticipated from development and implementation of this project. After several discussions among themselves, the Early Action Activities Subcommittee determined that the primary focus of Neighborhood Branding is to make residents and visitors aware of the history and value of the neighborhood. The project scope calls for designing a logo, tagline, and banners that will first be unveiled along Jefferson Avenue.

Gateway signs and murals will provide a visual cue to drivers and pedestrians that they are entering a unique neighborhood, while helping create pride of ownership for residents, and conveying that the Choice Neighborhood is a high-quality place to live, work, shop, and play.

Community Building

Branding and marketing the neighborhood is seen as a community building activity that will pull in many partners including residents, businesses, anchor institutions, business and civic associations, and City departments. This activity will build capacity and social cohesion as participants work together to develop a clear message to help attract investments to support the neighborhood's transformation goals. Further, it is an activity that puts the decision-making in the hands of neighborhood leadership.

Outcomes

Implementation of this early action will help brand and market the Marshall-Ridley Choice Neighborhood, improve the negative perception of the neighborhood, and attract new investments in support of the Transformation Plan goals. Success will be measured through the number of new business openings, private property investments, and increased foot traffic.

Project Schedule

The following activities are anticipated to complete the Neighborhood Branding:

Project Kick-Off: Early February 2018

Visioning Workshop: Late February 2018

Design Workshop: March 2018

Install Banners: May 2018



Early Action Activity #3: Celebrating the Arts

The purpose of Celebrating the Arts is to strengthen the neighborhood's identity and create a stronger sense of place through installation of site-specific public art in the MRCN. Specifically, the project will install fence art and a mural. Public art designs will build upon neighborhood features, history or culture, and engage residents (volunteers) in installation. This collaborative approach to designing and installing art will promote positive interaction, youth participation, and preservation of place creating a stronger sense of identity for the community. Celebrating the Arts is a creative tool that not only will have a positive lasting visual impact on the neighborhood, but will also help residents better understand, explore and preserve community history, culture, and values. Further, this activity will expose residents to art and culture by integrating it into the physical and social fabric of the neighborhood. The improvements also will encourage surrounding businesses to improve their building appearance.

After several conversations with other residents and the Steering Committee, research on various types of community art projects, and discussion among themselves, the Early Action Activities Subcommittee determined that the primary focus of Celebrating the Arts is to engage local residents—especially youth—in creating the visual arts that will be produced by this project.



The subcommittee prefers that a local artist or art instructor at one of the Newport News Public Schools be engaged to work with Ridley Place youth on the design and roll-out of the artwork.

The mural component of the Early Action Activity will be the fourth in a series of murals in the neighborhood celebrating the neighborhood's history. The first was installed in 2017 celebrating Ella Fitzgerald's 100th birthday; the second was installed in February 2018 recognizing W. Hale Thompson, attorney and civil rights activist who led the effort to integrate the city's libraries; and the third was installed in April 2018, celebrating the birth of Pearl Bailey. The new mural will be painted on the Boys & Girls Clubs facility at the intersection of Jefferson Avenue and Hampton Boulevard.

Community Building

Celebrating the Arts through various creative techniques is a community building activity that engages residents of all ages. This activity will build capacity and social cohesion as participants work with the artists to tell the neighborhood's stories. Further, it is an activity that puts the decision-making in the hands of residents. Residents will help shape the design of the art and assist in creating the art. Youth will learn valuable jobs skills training learning about what it takes to be a muralist.

Outcomes

Implementation of this early action will increase the sense of collective identity and promote volunteering in the MRCN. Buildings around the site will enhance their storefronts and community capacity will increase through youth learning about a creative career path. Success will be measured through the number of volunteers engaged in design and installation of the public art, increased foot traffic in the areas of installation, and residents' interest in identifying further opportunities for site-specific art in the neighborhood.

Project Schedule

The following activities are anticipated to complete Celebrating the Arts.

Project Kick-Off: Mid-January 2018

Develop RFP for Mural Artist: Mid-January 2018

Select Mural Artist: March 2018

Community Workshop: March 2018

Install Mural and Fence Art: May/June 2018

Dedication Ceremony: June 2018