



**WESTSIDE**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**EVOLVES**

**Resident + Community Meeting:  
April 29, 2021  
(Virtual + In Person)**

# AGENDA



PROCESS TO  
DATE



WHAT WE  
HEARD  
FROM YOU



YOUR BIG  
IDEAS  
TRANSLATED  
INTO A PROPOSED  
PLAN  
[COLLABORATIVE  
PLANNING]



WHAT'S  
NEXT?



QUESTIONS

# Neighborhood Study Footprint



## STAGE 1 Understand The Neighborhood

The first 3 months of the planning process will focus on understanding the people and geography of the neighborhood. The planning team will gather information on both the past and present of the community through surveys, interviews, observations and creative conversations.

Months 1-3



Months 4-6



## STAGE 2 Create a Shared Vision

After understanding the neighborhood, the planning team will work with the community to create a shared vision for the future of the neighborhood. Creative conversations with residents, businesses, community leaders and other stakeholders will define goals and priorities.

## STAGE 3 Design a Plan

Once a shared vision is in place, the planning team will create detailed plans for the neighborhood including people, buildings, services, infrastructure and public space. Alternatives and a draft plan will be presented to the residents and broader community for input before the plan is finalized.

Months 7-8

**WE ARE  
HERE**



Month 9



## STAGE 4 Make an Action Plan

In the final stage the planning team will create a common document with actionable next steps to inform the path forward for the future of the neighborhood. The final plan will guide the implementation of immediate and long term projects.



# History



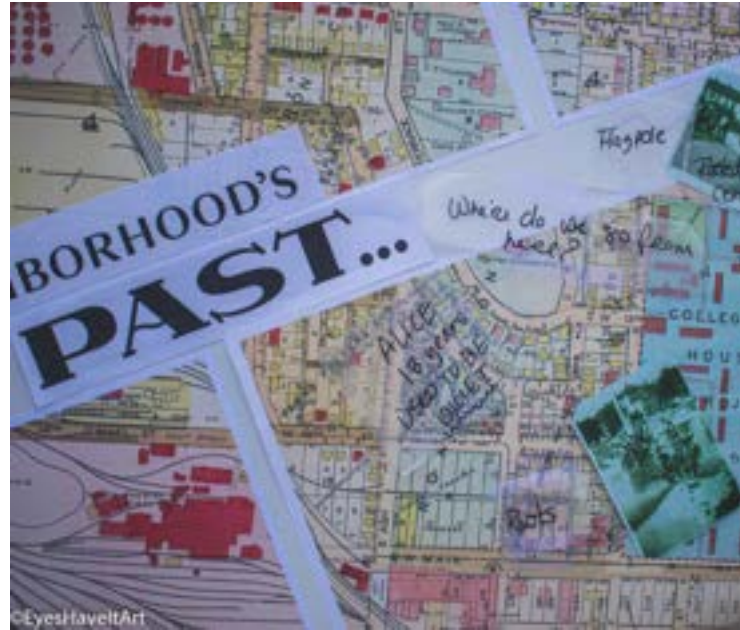
## Understanding the PAST

# Historic Street Network 1919







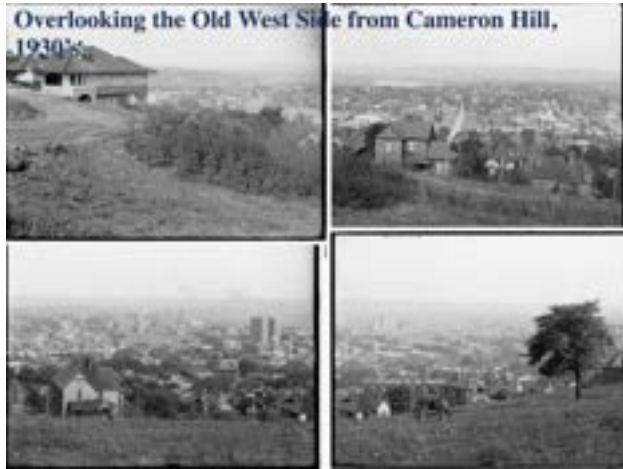


## My Neighborhood's Past, Present & Future...

## Historic Photo Collection from Residents



# Historic Narrative: Westside Research



Articles and photographs compiled from local resources to inform historic narrative and a timeline.

# HISTORY OF THE WESTSIDE

**1838**  
**Cherokee Removal**  
 The Chickamauga, a branch of the Cherokee tribe, were the original stewards of the land. After settlers arrived and claimed the land as their own, a forced mass migration event known as the "Trail of Tears" displaced the Chickamauga from their homes, temporarily housing them at camps such as Route's Landing in Chattanooga before sending them to Oklahoma.

**1861-1865**  
**Civil War**  
 During the Civil War, Cameron Hill was an important communications post for the Union army. Because of its access to rivers and railroads, Chattanooga was a key location for both the Union and Confederate armies and was referred to as the gateway to the deep south.

**1886**  
**Cameron Hill**  
 Residential lots along the side of Cameron Hill were auctioned, and the neighborhood became a fashionable part of town. The area had an incline and street railway accessing downtown.

**1917**  
**The Rise of Industry**  
 Factories of coke-fired iron and the developments of Tannery Falls led to the adjacent worker residences of College Hill Courts and Blue Hollow. The photo above shows a school mountain destroyed by a log.

**1950**  
**The Westside Redevelopment Plan**  
 designates 407 acres bounded by the Tennessee River for "slum clearing." The plan includes regrading the topography of the area for optimum vehicular access and relocating over 800 families in the Westside.

**1957**  
**Demolition Begins**  
 College Hill Courts remains as Urban Renewal demolishes all surrounding structures. Second District School seen in the middle ground along the new highway. Demolition began in early 1957 and continued for several years through the railroad relocation effort and the addition of Highway 27.

**1963**  
**Highway I-27 is Completed**  
 Highway I-27 is completed and opened to the public. Essential to its construction was the dirt transported from Cameron Hill.

**1977**  
**Gateway Towers**  
 Construction is completed on new apartment building for elderly citizens in Golden Gateway.

**1984**  
**Community Garden**  
 The community garden at Westside is started by Chattanooga area food bank.

**1991**  
**D.A.R.E.**  
 Gwendolyn Chetee and Gwendolyn Scott found D.A.R.E. at College Hill and call for the conversion of James A. Henry School into a community service building.

**1997**  
**James A. Henry Building is Completed**  
 The building features classrooms, community rooms, and other spaces for public engagement.

**2016**  
**Gaining Access**  
 The River walk extension from the newly developed Blue Cross Hollow Trail head opens, connecting south to St. Elmo.



**1872**  
**First Public School**  
 By 1872, Howard School had become the first public school for either white or African American children in Chattanooga. Professor James Henry, shown in this photograph, was the first African American principal of the school.

**1905**  
**Boynton Park**  
 In 1905, a 10-acre park atop Cameron Hill was dedicated as Boynton Park for Union Gen. Henry Boynton.

**1940**  
**College Hill Courts**  
 College Hill Courts affordable housing neighborhood opens with 407 units, making it the largest in Chattanooga.

**1954**  
**Making Way for a New Center**  
 In February of 1954, the Newton Community Center is demolished after a fire and rebuilt on Grove Street. The Center has provided childcare for members of the community since 1903 and continues today.

**1964-1989**  
**Zayre's**  
 Chattanooga's turned out in great numbers to shop at Zayre's on grand opening day, October 16, 1964. Mayor Ralph Kelley and CHA Executive Director Herbert Banks presided at the ribbon-cutting. Mr. Banks said that the opening of Zayre's was only the beginning for the Golden Gateway. At the time Great toothpaste was 4¢ and freezers were \$7.97 each.

**1980**  
**James A. Henry Elementary Closes**  
 College Hill Courts' James A. Elementary School closes and many renovations of commercial and community spaces are attempted but ultimately fail all through the 80's.

**1990**  
**College Hill Courts is Remodeled**  
 College Hill Courts is remodeled, making some houses disability accessible.

**2007**  
**Blue Cross Blue Shield Acquires Zayre Building**  
 After Blue Cross Blue Shield purchases Cameron Hill in 2000, 7 years later the complex is completed hiring 4,900 employees.

**2007**  
**Blue Cross Blue Shield Complex is Completed**

**2020**  
**Westside Evolves**  
 In September 2020, the Westside Evolves project was launched in an effort to understand the neighborhood, create a shared vision, and design a plan for the future of the neighborhood.

STEWARDS OF THE LAND | INDUSTRIAL NEIGHBORHOOD | URBAN RENEWAL | GOLDEN GATEWAY | POST-GOLDEN GATEWAY | WESTSIDE COMMUNITY EVOLVES



Local author and historian Rita Hubbard engaged to lead historic narrative (author African Americans of Chattanooga)

# 1,000 Resident Bags & Workshop Folders Distributed



# Engagement at the College Hill Flagpole



# Capturing the Everyday Life of the PRESENT

Photograph by artist Andrew Travis



©EyesHaveltArt

# The Imagination Team



Imagination Team in the community - Summer 2020 through Spring 2021



# Artist in Residence: Charlie Newton



Charlie's artistic interpretation of the planning process from Community Advisory Group meetings.

# Oral History Collecting at James A Henry 'Memory Room'



Rodney Brown



Sharon Dragg



Dorothea Sorrell

# Digital Storytelling: Ben Banks





**Looking Towards  
the Future**

A special place to be preserved – James A Henry Building



# A Community Landmark to be Preserved – Grace Tree



Bare arms saluting in all directions.  
Offering hugs to those down below.

Cypress

Maple

Poplar

Grove

Rooted in a space that shares voices.

Loud and clear we hear the ancestors.

Protection lives under her branches.

Times move but she is constant.

Making a way to handle the struggle.

A balancing act unlike no other.

A place.

A face.

Solitude.

A community giving Grace.

-Erika Roberts

# A Community Landmark to be Preserved – THE FLAGPOLE



Artist Andrew Travis



Resident Artist Terrance McCrobey (14 yo)

# A Community Landmark to be Preserved– Shelia Jennings Park





Special Places to be  
Preserved—  
Renaissance Church  
+ Newton Center



# Uplifting history – A Neighborhood Life Book



Artist April Corbett leading large scale art piece in progress.

# Celebrate the Westside: Community-Inspired Art & Poetry for Kwanzaa



Artist Andrew Travis

Bricks are strong.  
Bricks have legacy.  
Bricks are loyal.  
These bricks represent unity.  
Arrows pointing.  
Arrows informing.  
These arrows lead.  
Hands that touch  
Hands that guide  
Link hands and unite.

Building up the community with the spirit of sharing resources.

People grow.

Businesses grow.

Community grows.

Rich and rooted.

The branches of Grace

giving shade and perfect shadows.

Respecting the purpose and trusting the process

Gather close and enjoy the harvest

We've come far but not the farthest

The ancestors got us here; let's be clear

In the spirit of Sankofa..we go back and get it.

Today we create with our legacy in mind

Entering a new chapter we believe

Entering a new time we pay attention

Entering a new year we will achieve.

~Erika Roberts

PROVIDE A WORD OR PHRASE THAT REFLECTS HOW YOU ENVISION THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE FUTURE:





# **Feedback from Recent Workshops**

# March 2021 Workshops



472 Residents & Stakeholders  
Participated in 6 workshops



## Exercises + Work Sessions

Online Polling: Housing Design, Streetscape and Open Space Preferences; People/Supportive Services Priorities; Vision for a Future Westside

Design Workshop: The built environment

Services Workshop: Education & Youth; Health & Wellness; Income & Employment

Pre-Workshop/Other Activities: Resident and Community Survey; Imagination Team Exercises; Stakeholder Interviews; Residential and Commercial Market Assessments

# Community Feedback on Connectivity



- Connect to downtown, convention center
- Better + more reliable bus connections to jobs and amenities
- Connections to river
- Better internet connectivity: unreliable and unaffordable; Digital divide is widening the inequality
- More pedestrian friendly: walkable and rideable (walkers, bikers and wheelchairs)
- Downtown Shuttle service (and stops)
- Need more covered stops
- Topo challenge: how to get back up hill from lower area (ex. store)
- Main Street is GOOD, easy in and out access
- Library is a primary destination
- Lack of parking
- Unclear access through site "jacked up"
- GPS directions don't get people correctly through the community. Hard to navigate.
- Need benches along MLK to allow for places of rest on their way downtown
- No buses to North Shore
- Need more and wider sidewalks and good crossings; ramps
- Stitch with The Bend
- Better street grid - neighborhood is impenetrable and isolated
- Enhance tunnels
- 12th Street is unsafe
- If fire, wheelchairs can't get down stairs (Gateway Residents)
- YMCA route is important
- Too Far to go to get to Food Stamps

# Community Feedback on Housing



- Shopping and mixed-use best centered in the middle of the community for all to access
- Highrise near James A Henry
- Townhomes along Main Street
- Diversify housing; not just high-rises (Dogwood residents)
- In towers, need opportunities to encourage more communication among residents
- Single story residences for elderly and disabled
- Commercial along Main Street
- BCBS - was an old shopping center - would be a good location
- Possibly flip YFD and housing locations
- Up to 5 stories
- Updated housing conveniences
- Space between housing (not stacked on top of each other)
- Yards and porches
- Big windows for views (Gateway residents)

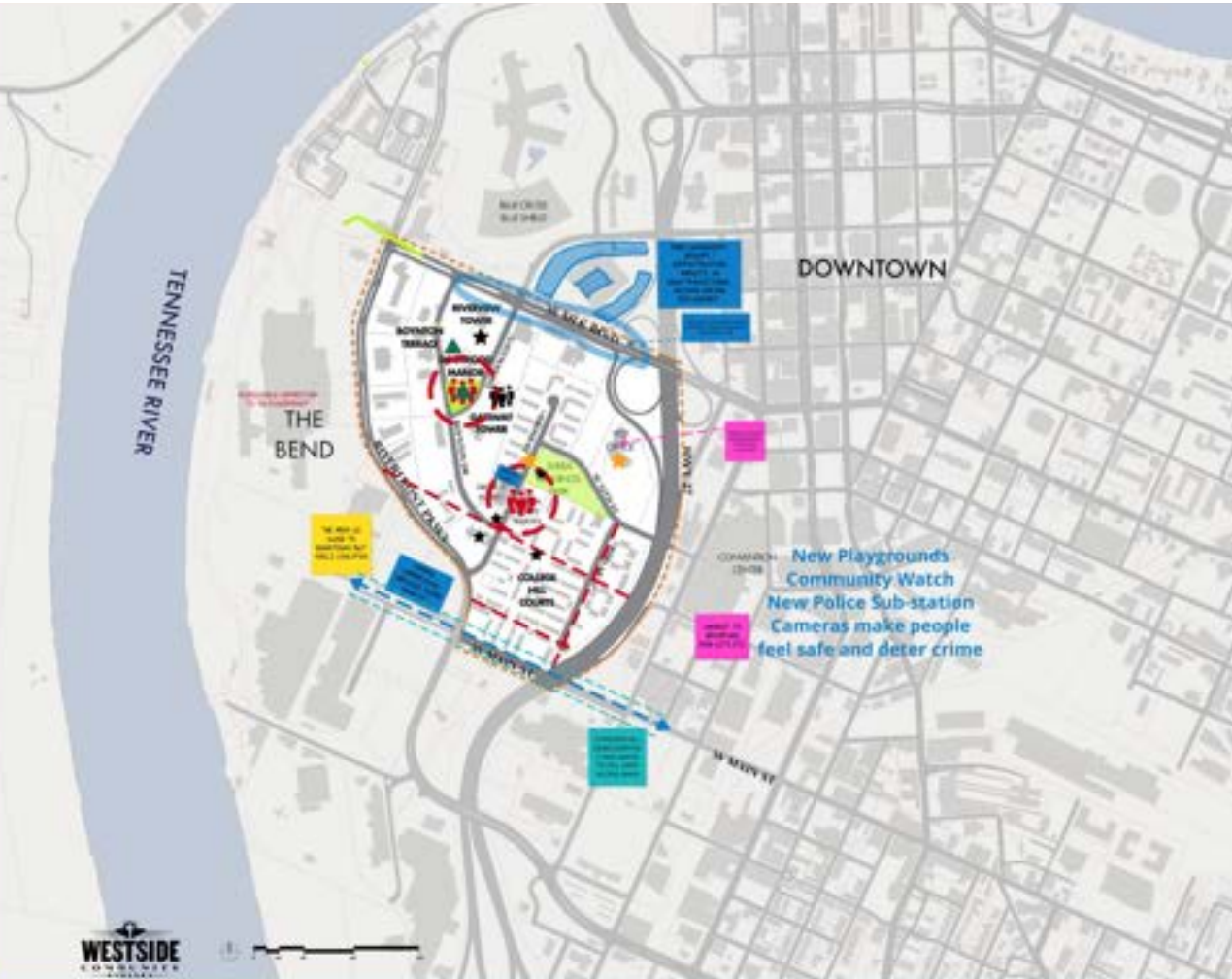


# Community Feedback on Open Space



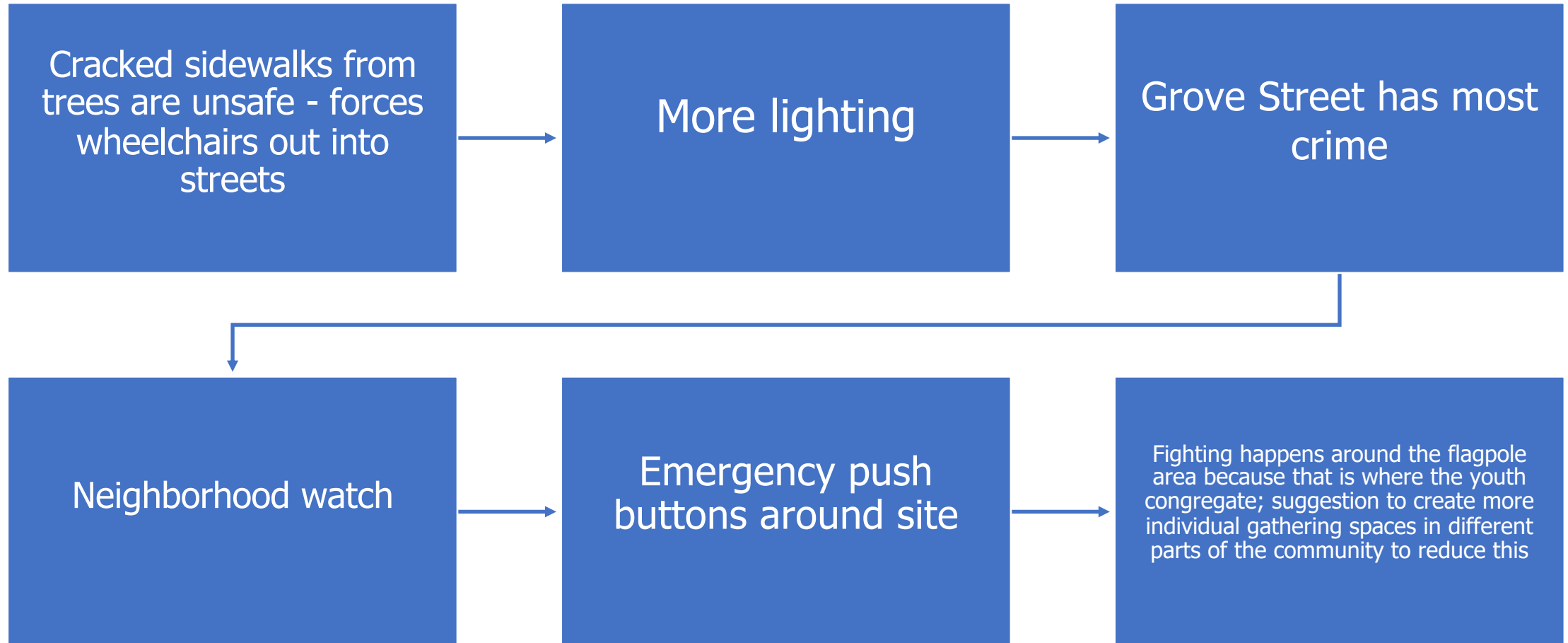
- Community Garden for health and fitness
- Shuttle for seniors to activities
- YFD centrally located for senior and youth activities, fitness, exercise programs, etc.
- Boynton Hill area has a sense of calm
- Gazebos at Boynton are good
- Need more landscaping and outdoor seating
- Need more designated non-smoking areas
- Picnic areas with grills
- Sports courts
- Better playground
- Flower gardens outside their homes (they use to compete with their neighbors for awards/recognition)
- Dog Park (residents have dogs)
- Multi-generational places of interaction between top and bottom of hill
- Built-in surfaces (ex. shuffleboard, checkerboard, etc)
- Water features
- Flowers
- Lots of talent in the community, outdoor stage area?

# Community Feedback on Amenities



- Grocery store along MLK
- Drug Store
- Blue Cross used to be a Zair/Red Food Store (similar to a Walmart)
- Urgent Care
- Bingo Hall
- Senior Daycare and Clubhouse
- Computer Lab
- Small Library
- Multi-purpose room for classes/activities
- Gym/Workout area
- Space for a farmer's market - accessible to all
- Pool
- Convenience Store
- Space for mentoring
- Copy room and services
- Dentist
- Places of worship
- Exercise Room
- Autonomous neighborhood
- Opportunities for small business

# Community Feedback: Improve Safety



# Health & Wellness

- Facilitate access to medical home either via consistent/easy to access transportation or by in-neighborhood, comprehensive clinic.
- Provide mental health services and community-based trauma-informed care.
- Create a multi-prong approach to food insecurity.
- Provide quality facilities and programming for recreation and physical fitness.
- Promote health in the design, construction and management of housing and amenities.
- Employ universal design principles to meet needs of and ensure access by persons with disabilities.



# Education & Youth

- Expand early education.
- Expand out-of-school time offerings.
- Provide reliable and free/affordable internet.
- Create better physical and programmatic connections with downtown Library.



# Income & Employment

- Provide supports and opportunity for micro-enterprise via low and no-cost incubator space.
- Leverage local businesses/development to create pathways/pipeline for job and training opportunities.
- Create job center for training and employment assistance as well as financial empowerment programs.
- Provide resources and supports to eliminate barriers to employment and training.



# Cross-cutting Initiatives/Priorities

- Support resident initiated and led activities.
- Invest in outreach and engagement to connect residents with existing services.
- Co-locate services and/or create physical and programmatic connections between key services in the neighborhood and beyond.
- Create flexible, multi-use spaces.
- Invest in/expand programs already in the community.
- Prioritize consistency and long-term commitment to programming.
- Create places & programs for socializing with particular attention to seniors & youth.
- Center the Arts.





**What if we can create a plan that reflects the community's priorities?**



# OPPORTUNITY SITES WESTSIDE

DRAFT for internal discussion only (04.12.21)



## Confirming Assumptions Regarding Target Sites

- |   |   |                                    |                      |                               |
|---|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| ① The Bend (115 Acres)                  | ⑧ Boynton Terrace Pkg & OS (1.8 Acres)    | ⑮ Sheila Jennings Park (3.43 Acre) |                      |                               |
| ② Subaru Lot (3.02 Acres)               | ⑨ Riverview Tower Open Space (1.83 Acres) | ⑯ YFD Office (6.13 Acres)          |                      |                               |
| ③ SE TN Development District (1 Acre)   | ⑩ Dogwood Manor Pkg & OS (2 Acres)        | ⑰ BCBS Parking Lots (14.17 Acres)  |                      |                               |
| ④ Comtrust Fed Credit Union (4 Acres)   | ⑪ Gateway Tower (6.4 Acres)               | ⑱ J&J Contractors (2.76 Acres)     |                      |                               |
| ⑤ 1104 Riverfront (1.05 Acres)          | ⑫ Mitsubishi Lot (4.78 Acres)             | ⑲ City Engineering Dept (1 Acre)   |                      |                               |
| ⑥ USPS Vehicle Maintenance (1.42 Acres) | ⑬ Golden Gateway Apts (9.32 Acres)        | ⑳ Environ. System Corp (1.9 Acres) |                      |                               |
| ⑦ CTI Engineering (2.3 Acres)           | ⑭ College Hill Courts (23 Acres)          | ㉑ Kelly Auto Group (1.78 Acres)    |                      |                               |
| --- Study Area                          | ■ Publicly Owned                          | ■ Privately Owned                  | ■ CHA Priority Sites | ㉒ AIM Center Pkg (1.85 Acres) |



**Summary,  
Next Steps & Wrap Up**

**Westside  
A thriving  
Growing  
Community  
Moving  
Culturally sound  
Embracing what was  
Building a healthy  
Enlightened  
Rich future for  
everyone**

~E



# Guiding Principles

- People-Centric Plan
- Build Upon Strengths
- Replace Affordable Units 1 for 1
- Mixed Income
- Mixed Use
- Preserve Community Assets & Culture
- Leverage Publicly Controlled Land
- Explore Public/Private Partnerships
- Scalable Plan that Grows as Additional Opportunities Emerge



# Thank you!

Visit [westsideevolves.com](http://westsideevolves.com) for more information.

